THE FOUR ARISTOTLES

OR THE FOUR WORLDS

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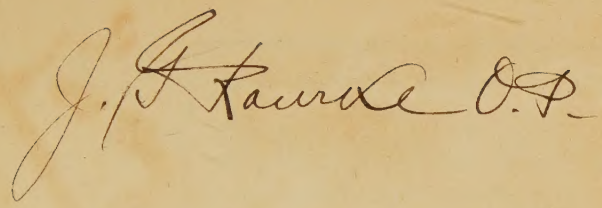

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THE FOUR MYSTERIES OF THE FAITH

BY

MONSIGNOR KOLBE, D.D., D.Litt.

OF CAPE TOWN

WITH A FOREWORD BY

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL GASQUET

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4

NEW YORK, TORONTO

BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND MADRAS

1926

Nihil obstat
GEORGIUS D. SMITH, S.T.D.
Censor deputatus.

Imprimatur
EDM. CAN. SURMONT
Vic. Gen.

WESTMONASTERII
die 9° *Junii*, 1926.

Made in Great Britain.

TO SAINT THÉRÈSE
OF LISIEUX

in gratitude for a favour
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could not have been written.

Lic: 883

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UNIVERSITA GREGORIANA.

ROMA (19),
Die Augusti 28, 1925.

Opus Rmi. viri, Domini Kolbe, quod inscribitur " The Four Mysteries of the Faith " pellegi ego infrascriptus ea quæ par fuit attentione animi et rerum ponderatione. Nihil, me judice, continet nisi fidei catholicæ apprime conforme et utilitati hujus potissimum temporis accommodatissimum.

M. DE LA TAILLE, S.J.,
in Pontificia Universitate Gregoriana de Urbe Sacræ Theologiæ lector.

FOREWORD

Mgr. Kolbe has produced in this little book, *The Four Mysteries of the Faith*, something that was much needed. Often, when instructing people in the Catholic Religion, one has wished to have something to put in their hands after the simpler elements of the Faith have been mastered in the Catechism, and this seems to be the very book. It is fresh and interesting and full of stimulating thought. The learned Father de La Taille, S.J., of the Gregorian University of Rome, has examined the little volume and has well summed up his opinion of it in words which I can quite endorse and accept as my own: "This," he writes, "is an interesting and even fascinating book. There is a freshness about it which makes old truths look quite new, and of the daily bread broken to the Christian people in the Catechism makes a feast for the cultured mind. The general trend of the doctrine is not only orthodox, but strikingly true to the inner sense of Catholic dogma. One wonders at times where the author has gathered certain views, which, while far from current in modern text-books, are, however, known to the professional theologian to be in direct continuity with the teaching of the old school of the Fathers." This is high praise indeed, but it is fully

deserved. Dr. Kolbe set out to produce a book that should have for its motto, "*non nova* sed *nove*," and the above opinion of a learned Professor of the Gregorian University shows that in this he has succeeded.

From the title it is not easy to guess the contents of the volume. The Four Mysteries of the Faith are the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Church, the Holy Eucharist. But under these headings are treated, and well treated, practically the whole range of Catholic teaching in regard to the Soul, the Sacraments of the Church, etc., etc. A glance at the index will show how much necessary religious knowledge is contained in these pages. I cordially, therefore, recommend the book to all teachers of Catholic doctrine, and I feel sure that it will furnish them with many new and true thoughts.

A. Card Gasquet

Rome, Palazzo di San Calisto,
May 13, 1926.

PREFACE

I have for many years been brooding over a treatise on the Four Mysteries of the Faith, but many causes have intervened to delay work upon it. To account for the delay I must take my readers into my confidence.

When I originally sketched out the plan, many of the thoughts that crowded in upon me were in a form so new that I could not find them explicitly stated elsewhere. I decided therefore that it was necessary to proceed very cautiously. We may be as original as we like in what is our own, but when we are delivering a message from above, we must beware of intruding extraneous ideas. We are indeed exhorted to teach *non nova sed nove*—not new things, but the old things in a new way. But God's truths are very delicate, and a human new way might easily bring in a new thing. I am very suspicious of anything which occurs to my mind if I cannot find it in the Great Masters. As one of my little child-friends put it, in the uncanny way childhood has of unconsciously happing on an epigram, "I have found out that you may be as sure as nuts, and yet be quite wrong all the time." This was one reason for waiting year after year.

Perhaps the chief cause of delay, however, was a footnote I found in one of Hurter's *Opuscula Patrum*

(small treatises of the Fathers of the Church). This note spoke of a book on the *Mysteries of Christendom*, by Scheeben, and seemed to say that he enumerated them as three. When I saw that I stopped dead. Scheeben is one of the great German theologians, and I would not cross his path for anything in the world. I tried to procure his book in all sorts of ways, but the war made it hard to get a German book. At last, by the kindness of a friend in Rome, I got an Italian translation.

This translation set my mind at rest, and I began again. I had been apprehensive for two reasons, first the number of the Mysteries, and second the doubt whether it was a new book and not a translation that was wanted on the subject. As to the number, I found that Hurter's note was in error and that my view was in full substantial accord with Scheeben's ; for though he elaborates his division into nine branches (not three) he distinctly teaches that five of these are subordinated to the other four. As for the character of the book, it is a very treasure-house of theology, but it is very long, and very heavy, and is addressed only to skilled theologians. My idea is to put forth something short, something light, and to appeal to the average mind—in other words, a concise little treatise of lay-theology.

There is no doubt about the need of such a book. I know no treatise on the subject in English, though I have often wanted one to lend to inquirers.

While I was thus halting between two courses, circumstances made it necessary for me to tell how I myself learned the Faith nearly fifty years ago.

My way would have been made very much easier at that time if somebody could have put into my hands a volume on the four Mysteries. As it was, I hobbled "up the slopes" on three of them, and did not get explicit insight into the fourth (or rather the third) until I was well on into my theological course. While writing the book called "Up the Slopes of Mount Sion" I saw more and more clearly that it was a personal preliminary to a higher theoretical work. That is why when the present volume appeared serially in South Africa it was linked with the previous one by the title "On the Heights of Mount Sion." It has now been thought better to make the sub-title the principal one, viz., "The Four Mysteries of the Faith." I make this explanation to prevent my South African friends from thinking that it is a different book.

It is always a pleasing duty to express gratitude, so I wish to thank the Jesuit Fathers of South Africa and Rome, and especially Father de La Taille, S.J., Professor of Theology in the Gregorian University, my Alma Mater. He turned the searchlight of his intense theological learning on to my manuscript, and the book owes much to his corrections and suggestions. Moreover, he allows me to add a paragraph of his to this Preface. Humility scruples at the seemliness of my publishing it, but the temptation is irresistible. He writes :

"This is an interesting, and even fascinating book. There is a freshness about it, which makes old truths look quite new, and of the daily bread broken to the Christian people in the Catechism makes a feast for

the cultured mind. The general trend of the doctrine is not only orthodox, but strikingly true to the inner sense of Catholic dogma. One wonders at times from where the author has gathered certain views, which, while far from current in modern text-books, are, however, known to the professional theologian to be in direct continuity with the teaching of the Old School and of the Fathers."

To revert for a moment to the import of the title I should like to add that when I speak of the "Four Mysteries," people often ask me, "Which are the four?" That very question shows the need of the book.

F.C.K.

St. Mary's, Cape Town.
8th January, 1926.

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I

EXPLANATIONS

Fundamental Analogies. There are some analogies which are so deeply rooted in the nature of things, and therefore in our nature as well, that they are spontaneously used and universally understood. They become springs of thought as well as of poetry. Two of these, perhaps the aptest and the commonest, refer to the downward drift and the upward effort characteristic of all material things. For these the mind calls up pictures of the river flowing steadily down towards the fatal cataract, and of the mountain offering itself to the enthusiastic climber. When, in addition to the latter analogy, or perhaps in expansion of it, we hear that the Kingdom of Heaven is described as a city set on a hill and is called the New Jerusalem because Jerusalem was built on Mount Sion, it will be seen that I had some reason in at first desiring that my title should be "On the Heights of Mount Sion."

St. Paul's use of them. It is not without set purpose that I have so early mentioned the two chief characteristics of the material world. St. Paul

makes both of them prominent in his teaching. "The fashion (*schema*) of this world passeth away," or, as we may translate it, considering the position of the verb, "Passing away is the distinguishing mark of this material universe" (1 Cor. vii, 31). Still more striking, startling indeed, is his general description (Rom. viii) of the whole sweep of evolution, lifting all creation in a struggle of blind hope towards the revelation and the liberty of the sons of God.

The Adjective Incarnational.

From the beginning let us say it. The central and the last word for us is not spirit, but Incarnation. The destinies of angels and of men and of material things are all bound up together, and it is only human pride that tries to ignore it. To think that in the New Dispensation God's dealings with us are purely spiritual and therefore matter cannot be a channel of grace, and that our dealings with God are also purely spiritual and therefore worship must proceed without symbolism, both are the effect of pride—the same pride that made some angels fall away in their initial moment of probation. We shall often have to discuss this conception in exploring the Mysteries. We shall always find a living clue in the recognition that our faith, our worship, our destiny are not exclusively spiritual, but always—I want the adjective, and must coin it—Incarnational. And by this word I shall always mean the putting of spirit or matter or both combined into a matrix of grace, thereby lifting them to the Divine.

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Why the book was at first named "On the Heights."

Meanwhile the metaphor of my first title should be obvious to all. Whoever has climbed even a small mountain knows the differences between the slopes and the heights. In my previous little book, "Up the Slopes of Mount Sion," I described the ascent of an inquiring mind, through winding paths, through woods which gave no forward view, over undulations which confused distances and directions, into ravines which might be impracticable, along ridges which might be unscalable. Now the same mind has got to an elevation whence it can see as on a map the direction it ought to have taken from the start, the easier ways which might have avoided dangerous foot-work, the short cuts which would have saved much fatigue. Seeing these things the climber can shout useful directions to those who have not yet emerged from the intricacies of the slopes. His own way is now clear to the top, the air is purer, the noises of the valley have died away, he has lifted his horizon with him and his outlook is enlarged. Thus my original title was justified.

Why the change of Title?

But though justified, it was not therefore complete. It did not do all that a title should do. A reader not only asks "How did you come to write the book?" but "What is the book going to be about?" And therefore I already had a sub-title, which is now the only one, namely, "The Four Mysteries of the Faith." I proceed to explain it.

The Book is Addressed to Catholics.

First of all, by saying "*The* Faith" I define my audience. I am speaking to my own people. There is an assumption in the article *the* which would be bad manners if I were talking to Protestants or Agnostics. I do not now address myself to them, because if I did I should need a preliminary discussion. I should have to bring up a whole array of considerations from Scripture or from the primal consciousness and conscience of human nature to prove that I am entitled to stand upon the platform from which I wish to begin. Other writers have done this far better than I could hope to do, and I leave it to them.

But other Readers are not beyond its scope.

Taking this work as done, then, I turn to my fellow-Catholics with a study in analysis of the faith we have in common. I have of course neither the power nor the desire to prevent other friends from reading what I say. And it may well be that some such friends may find in the analysis something which shall urge them to reconsider their own position. They may learn that the Catholic Faith is more organically complete, or more deeply rooted, or endowed with more delicate beauty, than they have hitherto thought. This must not lead them to fancy that my book was intended as a controversial attack. Had that been so, my method must have been radically different. My attitude is positive, not negative; and it is controversial only in the sense that in this mixed world you cannot say "Yes" to some people without saying "No" to others. What I have

to say I address directly to Catholics, and to make this quite clear I speak confidently of "The Faith."

Two Meanings of "Mystery"

This makes it easier for me to define what I mean by Mystery—a word which requires careful definition because of the variety of meanings it has accumulated in the course of its development. Sometimes it means merely something secret. "Why all this mystery?" we say in impatience when we feel that some announcement is being held back from us. This sense becomes more important when the secret is a ritual or religious one, as in the Eleusinian "mysteries" of old Paganism. Now a secret may be an essential one, hidden not by anybody's will but by the nature of things; not because people will not let us see, but because even if we see we cannot understand. Both meanings, for instance, are combined in a message written in a cypher of which we have not the key: it is a mystery to us both because it is a secret kept from us and because we cannot understand. If anybody gives us the key, the secret is told and the mystery is revealed. In this second sense, if we push the meaning of the word "understand," life is pervaded with mystery. There is simply nothing, within us or without, which we fully comprehend: we move about in worlds not realized and find unutterable depths even in a "flower from the crannied wall."

Both used by us.

Both these meanings of mystery—the secret and the unintelligible—have had a development in Christian history. Our early

worship had to be secret for many reasons, chiefly of course that the Eucharist might be kept from profanation: hence the Eucharist came to be called *the* Christian mystery, or secret. It was an easy train of thought that caused the Greek word *mysterion* and the Latin word *sacramentum* to be in some ways synonymous, and a good deal of honest indignation has been wasted over our English embalming of this phrase in our translation of Eph. v, 33, where marriage is said to be "a great sacrament," or mystery.

The definition intended here. Like many other terms of deep import in the Christian language—like the word "grace," for example, or "glory," or "peace," or "merit"—"mystery" has, in the New Testament, one predominant fullness of meaning, which is always intended in cases of doctrinal emphasis, though sometimes in casual statements or under special conditions it may convey a subordinate or partial or analogous significance. The full meaning, that which is intended throughout this book, connotes two things: (1) a truth beyond our ken; (2) the necessary fact of revelation. It may be defined as "a divinely revealed truth which we could not have apprehended without this revelation, and which we cannot comprehend even now that it is revealed."

A proviso. And in this definition—let us be quite clear—the word "comprehend" is used in its ordinary sense. We may fairly say that we comprehend or understand the formation of rocks,

the laws of organic life, the character of human beings. In other words, Nature is within our ken. When a man says woman is a mystery to him, he only means that he lacks knowledge he might very well have to explain her. At least we would say Huxley understood the laws of biology, Leonardo da Vinci understood Art, Shakespeare understood human character. If then in the middle of my book somebody were to say to me, " Yes, but after all, *everything* is a mystery," I should reply, "Quite true, but why change the subject so abruptly ? " He and I should be using the same word, but should be talking of quite different things. Let no one, then, interrupt my reasoning with the sentimentalism of "the crannied wall."

II

NUMBERING THE MYSTERIES

Partial Meanings. It will be readily understood that a great complex mystery may be made up of many parts, each of which may be a mystery within the terms of the definition. Thus we speak of the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary, every one of which is an integral part of the Mystery of the Incarnation. Our forefathers extended this meaning, quite validly as we shall see, in their Mystery Plays, which included not only the whole range of Scripture story, but lives of the Saints as well. In this sense, the number of mysteries is indefinitely great.

An apparent exception. Sometimes one hears, especially from those of the last generation, of "the five principal mysteries." This however is not valid: it proceeds partly from a mistake in grammar, and partly from not adverting to the meaning of "mystery." The error is based on an answer in a catechism once used in Ireland: "The principal mysteries are the Unity and Trinity of God, and the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ." Here, grammar shows that the catechism

is enumerating two, the Trinity and the Incarnation, both of them slightly expanded. To count them as five implies that the Unity of the Godhead is a Mystery. But it is not. Not only can it be apprehended, but it was by the Greeks actually apprehended, without revelation. It is an essential and natural truth. The Mystery is that which says that this Unity is also a Trinity.

Compressions. This enumeration in the catechism as two, is of course correct. The Church is often satisfied with explicitly naming only two. When we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross and the words, " In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen," we are in epitome confessing the whole of our religion in the two mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation. We do the same in the Athanasian Creed, in the *Te Deum*, in the *Gloria*, etc. And a still further compression is the utterance of a single word with knowledge and devotion, at the hour of death, the name of Jesus.

Amplifications. For purposes of instruction it sometimes becomes necessary to give a more explicit treatment. Scheeben, in his treatise on the Mysteries of Christendom—a treatise in which intellectual light and spiritual warmth are intensely and happily combined—gives us the following division :

1. The Blessed Trinity.
2. The Creation of Mankind in Grace.
3. Sin.
4. The Incarnation.

5. The Eucharist.
6. The Church and her Sacraments.
7. Justification.
8. Glorification.
9. Predestination.

In this division, convenience for exposition is frankly followed in preference to logical dependence. The 2nd positively and the 3rd negatively presuppose the 4th. The 7th, 8th and 9th are a portion of the 6th. Even the 5th comes under the head of the Sacraments in the 6th, but must stand out by itself on account of the infinite dignity conferred on it by the Real Presence. Thus it may be said that Scheeben's scheme is one of Four Mysteries (1, Trinity; 2, Incarnation; 3, Eucharist; 4, Mystical Body), some of which are expanded into sub-divisions.

The order chosen here.

As it is my desire to be more concise (Scheeben's book is of nearly 700 pages large octavo), I shall treat of the same Four Mysteries, without however adopting his order. The reason of there being four is easily perceived. The Trinity essentially stands alone. The Incarnation is revealed to us as threefold. Considered in regard to the separate human life of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is emphatically the Mystery of the Incarnation; when it is extended throughout humanity, it becomes the Mystery of the Mystical Body, or of the Bride of Christ, or of the Kingdom of Heaven; when it is extended through time and space, it becomes the Mystery of the Eucharist, of the Perpetual Sacrifice, of the Sacramental Presence.

It is the Church's order. And this is the order the Church herself adopts in the Apostles' Creed: (1) the Trinity, with (2) the Incarnation imbedded in it ; (3) the Catholic Church ; and (4) the Communion of Saints. Historically these Four Mysteries have been equal and parallel sources of life and energy in Christendom, and all other Christian doctrines and practices are integrally and essentially involved in them.

Subject of Book stated. How these Mysteries were revealed, how and why they have ever here or there been lost, what their relations are to one another, and what our attitude should be towards them all—such are going to be our themes throughout the book.

III

HOW MYSTERIES CAN BE REVEALED

The necessity of metaphor.

It is obvious that if a truth be altogether beyond our ken, there is no direct way of stating it to our intelligence. If you tell a small boy that "a parabola may be regarded as an ellipse whose centre has been projected to infinity," you will probably only hurt his feelings. But when the intelligence is more fully developed, there is nothing so beyond its ken as to make revelation quite impossible. Even the small boy could, by diagrams, be made to see *something* in your cryptic proposition. Take the case of a man born blind: you would find it difficult to explain colour to him, but something you could do, by analogy, by simile, by metaphor, by parallels with the other senses, so as quite to surprise a stranger by his range of useful knowledge in matters of pure sight. Since we have no direct vision of things divine, revelation must be to us of an indirect character: it must come to us by analogy, by simile, by type, by parable, by something or other which shall translate the truth into terms within our capacity.

An objection met. Sceptics have tried to make us uncomfortable about this. They say, "If I talk to you about a tree, you can see it and feel it: it is real. But if you talk to me about Three Persons in One God, I do not understand what God is, what Person is: the statement is not real. And what is the use of an unreal revelation?" But our friend the sceptic has forgotten a very important fact. We have no direct knowledge of what the tree is, either. When I say I *see* the tree, it only means that certain phenomena press themselves on me, owing to a number of vibrations that have tickled my retina in a special way. All these interior experiences tell me of something outside. In the case in question I call that something a tree, but what it really is I do not know. The knowledge we thus get of the natural world is quite consistent enough for practical purposes, but without diving into philosophy the ordinary man would say it is entirely symbolic. Learned men in their studies have worked themselves into all kinds of tangles over this non-reality, or ideality, or phenomenality, of the universe. Such speculations are an interesting and harmless pursuit, so long as men do not paralyse their own energies by over-introspection and put themselves out of use in a world of action.

Comparison of our two Worlds. We are therefore in possession of two worlds of knowledge, one of Nature, the other of Grace. Both are thoroughly practical up to all the limits of our needs. Both are inexhaustibly varied within and beyond our range. Both together provide us with all

we want for our perfectibility in time and eternity. Both are symbolic when regarded from without: both prove entirely real when we rightly trust ourselves to them in experience. In both we are occasionally deceived by illusion or mirage; but both are self-corrective by common sense. It would be beyond all things foolish to refuse to trust our senses because of the puzzles of psychology: it is equally foolish to allow ourselves to be inhibited from spiritual activity by reason of the riddles of scepticism. We are by destiny creatures of action: our activity lies among realities: realities are conveyed to our minds mostly by symbols. It is therefore our duty to study these symbols carefully; but it would lead to sheer inanity to try to reject symbolism altogether.

IV

HOW TO BEGIN

Our starting point. When we want to read the meaning of the universe, it makes a great difference where we begin. If (as the Experiential School does) we start with mere sense-knowledge of phenomena or symbols, and proceed upon a line of materialistic reasoning which makes it *à priori* impossible ever to get beyond the phenomena, we shall be like a squirrel in his revolving cage : mentally we may be intensely active but we shall never really get more forward. We shall not only cease to believe in God, but shall be debarred from consistently believing even in our own existence. We must become totally sceptical or even dogmatically agnostic. And this is the very worst form of *à priori* dogmatism in the whole history of philosophy. No, it is not the symbols that give meaning to the realities, it is realities that give meaning to the symbols. We must therefore begin with realities.

The Four kinds of Reality.

Of course nobody starts with a clean slate. All must think for themselves up to the limit of their capacity, but it is only the fool who will not utilize the wisdom with which he has the chance of starting. Such wisdom tells us that there are four grades of reality : (1) the essential and only independent Being, whom we adore as God ; (2) spiritual creatures, angels and souls of men, dependent but permanent and immortal ; (3) material things, which are not of themselves permanent and are constantly passing away ; and (4) such things as dreams and fancies, which have a real existence in our own minds but no objective reality.

My own soul first.

The first reality I know, and the only one I know directly, is my own spiritual self, an intellectual being, and it is utterly impossible for me to explain myself as a bundle of casually connected phenomena that have happened to shuffle themselves into consciousness ; still less as a pencil of physical forces centred on a mathematical point. Hume tried this acrobatic feat of mentality, but had to admit that he never had any success in it outside his lone study. When little Alice on the other side of the Looking-Glass was told by Tweedledee that she was only part of the Red King's dream, her indignant repudiation was not only sweetly human but altogether rational. There may be difficulties about my mind having been inactive in babyhood, or even now in sleep ; but no theory can in my normal life supplant the immediate consciousness of my own existence as an intellectual reality.

Then the External World. Simultaneously with this fundamental truth, it is borne in on me that there are millions of other beings like myself, and that I am not the centre of the universe. The reality of the material world I know from my own body, which (whatever it may be) is by direct intuition known to be real: and the reality of other men I know because they manifest themselves in the same way that I do.

Then God. The next intellectual step, universally and irresistibly taken by mankind, is that behind these realities so directly symbolized to us there is a Reality which accounts for them all. This Reality we call God. The idea of God has been very varied, but it has been universal: and it is always highest where the intelligence has been most highly developed. The Greeks and Romans, with many other cultivated pagans, more or less identified Him with the *cosmos*, the world as a whole, but (and this *but* is a very important exception) with the idea of Destiny superadded. Buddha identified Him with a self-subsistent Moral Law. The Egyptians saw Him symbolized in the Sun, the source of all our energy. Plato saw Him as Absolute Beauty; Aristotle, as Absolute Existence. But one way or another the idea is universal: there are no Atheists, only a few who call themselves so. Even Agnostics see Him through the haze of awe in which they contemplate the Unknowable.

Christ the Centre of the Universe.

If now amid the maze of mortality, we can find the Centre which shall turn chaos into design, and if further the Great Reality of the Beyond, from which we came and to which we return, has made any direct communication with us, then we have an explanation of our destiny sufficient for plain folk, and the path of action lies open before us. About the Centre there is no difficulty. The Man Christ Jesus, who under Pontius Pilate was lifted up on the Cross, has drawn all things unto Himself. Whether we are for Him or against Him, it is a plain historic fact that the destinies of all mankind converge upon Him. The world sometimes, here or there, tries to ignore Him: it cannot. Beyond all cavil, He is the Centre.

Therefore the Revealer.

Now this Centre claims to have come from God, to be the Son of God. He identified Himself with the Godhead and received the worship of those who adored Him as God. To prove to us that He really came to us from the Beyond, He brought Himself back after we had dismissed Him thither through the gates of death. Therefore from Him, and from no one else, we take the Mysteries of the Beyond.

The Reality of His Story.

These things were not done in a corner. They occurred in the full light of history: and the mention of Pontius Pilate in the Creed is the expression of our confidence in this fact. We are not following tales or legends. People tell us there have been other Incarn-

ations, other claims of Virgin Birth. True : but these were only legends or myths, invented by revering love long after the heroes had passed away, and they only serve to show how wistfully humanity was looking for Truth in the right direction. The story of Christ was not only first told, with historic self-restraint, by eye-witnesses ; it was also continued in the world, as we shall see, by a deathless Personality.

The futility of objections. The historic nature of the life of Christ is of course the stronghold which His enemies most persistently attack. They strain every nerve to bring the Gospels late into the second or third century. And when men are very learned and very ingenious, they can get up a case for anything they want to prove. When, in addition, they talk vaguely about "higher criticism" and "advanced thought," they show how they understand the art of ensnaring fools. The real truth is, that these men start out with an *à priori* dogma. They assume that anything miraculous, if not a lie, is a myth, and that no myth is contemporaneous with the event. As soon as people take up an attitude of *à priori* dogmatism, they may be disregarded as disputants. We may put these higher critics, mostly German, along with the ingenious sceptics, mostly British, who want to make us doubt our own existence.

Subject of the book restated. With very broad light and shade, then, we have sketched out the line of thought which justifies us in receiving Mystery from Jesus Christ. Coming as the

culmination of a revealing process of secular duration, He throws light, not only forward to the end, but backward on the whole past, and gives the precision of faith to those Scriptures which previously had evoked only the vague longings of hope. Interpreting the Old Testament by the New—which is not "higher" but "the highest" criticism—we are enabled to make generic statements about God's dealings with man; and as a result we can see a law applicable to all the Mysteries, showing how the mind of man was gradually led from Symbol to Reality, from Metaphor to Mystery. In several separate chapters we shall study this process for each of the Four Mysteries. And then from the height of this Pentecostal tableland we shall be able to see in the history of the world the devious downward paths by which the mind of man has often gone back from Mystery to Metaphor, and from Metaphor to Nothingness.

V

FROM METAPHOR TO MYSTERY

The Way of the Child. Anyone who has exercised the mother's privilege of lifting a baby soul to the thought of God will know what a complex process of symbol and simile is necessary to dispel the mists of baby materialism. "Isn't God afraid of the wolves?" was one of my little friends' objection to the doctrine of Omnipresence. There was also a little boy, whose father I know, who had lost a baby brother named Malcolm, and had been told that "God was taking care of Malcolm," and he knew that taking care of baby meant that under no circumstances must you let the baby drop. Some time afterwards, on hearing that God had made the stars and that they did not fall because He held them up, the child began to sob bitterly; and his reason was, "If God has to hold all those things up, He will let Malcolm drop." Yet somehow, by figures, by stories, by gestures, by the sense of reverence, by the use of prayer, the little mind rises to such conceptions of the Infinite as are within its grasp. The natural, and therefore the divinely appointed, way is (in addition to the mother's poetry

of tropes and analogies) that the child idealizes and projects on to a sufficiently infinite plane the excellences that he knows and loves—learning the four essential Divine attributes from his parents, the Power and Justice of God from his father, and the Wisdom and Mercy of God from his mother. Some people indeed who fail of due training, and whose souls are " immersed in matter," remain materialistic all their lives. But in proportion as, after the Old Testament temple-worship of childhood, we come to worship God in spirit and in truth, our thoughts of Him we worship become themselves more and more spiritual and true. The normal way for a child, then, is to proceed through a multiplicity of figures to the Great Reality.

The Way of the Race. What is true for the individual child has been true also for the race. No genuine student of history can have failed to observe how many generations have often been required for the incubation of a great idea, and how ineffective a truth can be when announced before its due season. This is especially the case with the idea of God. Even in the inspired record, the expression of this idea seems to pass through an apparent stage of polytheism and through many " economic " phases of anthropomorphic imagery. Adam is said to have thought he could hide from God : Jonah thought he could run away from Him. For many centuries any form of image-worship served to seduce the Israelites from the spiritual adoration of the One True God. Prophet after prophet came to lift the notion higher and higher, until in the days of the Maccabees the

people could suffer and fight and die for a purely spiritual faith.

The Fatherhood of God. Consider the one point, the supreme knowledge, of the Fatherhood of God. It is expressly mentioned only about ten times in the Old Testament. Sonship is more often mentioned, and the two words being correlative ought to convey the same idea: but the point of view is different. Psalm lxxxviii, a Messianic psalm, gives it as a distant vision of prophecy: "He shall cry out to me, Thou art my Father." Isaias touches it once: "Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer." Jeremias, three times: "Therefore call to me: Thou art my Father"; and again: "For I am a Father to Israel." Malachi, the last of the prophets, reasons on it: "If I be a Father, where is my honour?" and "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" The book of Wisdom says once: "Thy providence, O Father." And Ecclesiasticus has the prayer: "O Lord, Father, and God of my life," and adds the remarkable prophetic expression, "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord."

Revealed by the Son. Not until this phase, not until His children had learnt to call Him Father, did He, from whom all Paternity on earth or in Heaven is named, send His only-begotten Son to reveal to humanity the true meaning of the mystery of Fatherhood. The word *Father*, so scantily used in the generations gone by, was always on the

lips of Our Lord. His first recorded utterance was "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" His last word on this side of the grave was, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Tests. How do we know that this was anything more than a beautiful metaphor? Well, how do we ever know when the line is passed between Symbol and Reality? Look at little children at play; everything is done in dramatic figure, and the blood-curdling shrieks which the little lungs can emit when the players are being scalped by Red Indians or eaten up by lions, would be incredible if they were not a daily occurrence. The mother sits by and listens to it all without a tremor. Suddenly there is another shriek and the mother flings aside her work and rushes anxiously to the rescue. This time something real has happened, and the mother knew it by the quality of the shriek. A stranger would not know it at once, but even he would soon perceive it by the repetition, by the intensity, by the variety of the inarticulate appeal for help. This, it might be said, is only children's play: true, but in spiritual matters we are all only children of a larger growth.

Take a case of adults. One ship is passing another with no means of verbal communication. On one of them the sailors are seen to be gesticulating; at first this demonstration is taken in fun and a gay reply is made; but the gestures are more frequently and more intensely repeated; they are varied; they become impassioned and importunate. When in new response a boat is lowered, the gestures show satis-

faction and gratitude; everybody then knows that there was real need for help.

Conclusion. When therefore symbolical language is used, we recognize the transition from sign to reality, from metaphor to mystery, by the frequency, the variety, the insistence, the convergence and the emphasis of the symbols used, and by the character of the person who uses them.

For example: Why has not the washing of the feet been taken as a Sacrament by the Church? Because it was not promised beforehand; it was not foretold; minds were not previously prepared for it; it was not insisted upon beyond the once. It was therefore understood to be a parable,* accessory, but not essential, to a greater Symbol which *had* been foretold and promised and insisted upon, and was thus known to be a Mystery or a Sacrament. We shall see as we go on how our Lord used precisely the same method for each of the Four Mysteries, and that He did not use it for anything else.

* The Church in Milan during the fourth century used the ceremony of washing the feet, and St. Ambrose (or one writing in his name) claimed for it a kind of sacramental effect, but (strangely enough) as an accessory of Baptism, not of the Eucharist. Perhaps, if I may venture a suggestion, our Lord used it as a link-parable between the two Mysteries. The use which the Universal Church now makes of it is for a dramatic representation of the Passion, and it seems to be for the benefit of the washer rather than of the washed.

VI

WHY SYMBOLS RATHER THAN SPEECH?

Developing Revelation Appropriate to developing People.

The examples I have been giving have dealt with signs to the exclusion of speech. But in the case of the Christian Mysteries it is asked, why not direct speech? Many answers spring up spontaneously. Vocal words are only one form of communicative signs, and often are not the most effective of these. Again, a revelation which is handed down in the very extensive set of writings called The Bible, and in vast libraries expounding every point of it, can hardly be said to be speechless. But people narrow the objection down to the question, Why could not our Lord at once in clear unmistakable language define the doctrines He meant to teach? Again the answers are manifold, but a quite sufficient one lies in the nature of the minds that have to receive the revelation. Would anybody, for example, ever give detailed instructions on marriage to a kindergarten class? And the proportion of mankind which is in spiritual babyhood is nothing short of marvellous. Surely the Creator wishing to make a revelation to an

evolutionary race would do so in an evolutionary manner.

Cultivation of the Mental Soil. The average human mind requires considerable preparation for the reception of any deep truth. A few pages back I gave an example of such a truth uttered to a mind unprepared. I imagined somebody saying to a small boy, "A parabola may be regarded as an ellipse whose centre has been projected to infinity." The statement would be wholly ineffective; clear as the words are, the little mind is not prepared for them. But, send the boy to school, teach him geometry by measurement and by figure, there will come a time when he knows something about the parabola and the ellipse, and then your statement will reveal to him that two things which he had thought to be entirely different can be brought under a single law. Your statement now is illuminating and fruitful. It throws light backward on the whole of his mathematical progress and for the future gives him a new principle whereby even more complex curves can be classed into families.

Even Philosophers need preparation. If intellectual truths require intellectual preparation, far more do divine truths require divine preparation. What effect would the enunciation of the doctrine of the Trinity have on the unprepared mind? None whatever. Immanuel Kant, probably the foremost mind in extra-Catholic philosophy, asked what it mattered to him whether there were three persons in the Godhead, or twenty. That is all the

most fruitful doctrine in the world did for him, in spite of all his philosophy: what did it matter to him? The seed of the Word has to be sown in prepared soil, and the true husbandman pays even more attention to the soil than to the seed. Tom Paine once said, "If God had meant to give us a revelation, He would have written it on the face of the sun" —a foolish remark for a supposed leader of thought. In what language would He write it? and who would interpret it? and how many of us would be ready to receive it? and if it had been done, Tom Paine himself would be the very first to call it a curious freak of nature. The true revelation of God has been written, in human and divine characters far more visible to us than the sun in the sky, with the further advantage that the message not only delivers itself, but also interprets itself, and adapts itself to every capacity. God has done more than the sceptic challenged him to do.

A point for us to consider.

I sometimes wonder, in this connection, whether in our catechetical instruction of children we do not now and then transgress this principle by laying before them truths expressed with a theological accuracy and completeness too advanced for their powers of perception. They will never, of course, join in Kant's irreverence with a "What does it matter to me?" But they will get into the way of having important truths lying inoperative in their minds. Such truths are like guests that come before their host is ready and thus miss something of their welcome. When the seed of the Word lies too long on the wayside, it is

apt to become sterile even if the fowls of the air do not gather it up. Often such children seem to miss the delicious sense of newness which developing truth brings to ripening minds: they have "heard it all before." This is perhaps why "born Catholics" are often amused at the enthusiasm of converts, whereas perhaps they ought to be ashamed of their own laxity of apprehension—for each of the Four Mysteries (and the converts have just discovered one, if not two) might well be a perennial source of enthusiasm. At any rate, every good teacher will throw more zeal into communicating the living flesh and blood of doctrine to his pupils than into anatomizing its theological skeleton: or, to change the metaphor but not the mystery, he will *break* the bread of life to them lest their little souls should find the crust too hard. This by the way; but it has its bearing on the main issue.

Must we not consider the Revealer?

A further answer, equally sufficient, depends on another principle. We have noted that our recognition of the character of a communication depends partly on the utterance and partly on the personality of the speaker. When, therefore, Christ came into the world to give us a revelation whose primary essence is humility, can we imagine Him giving it in a form whose primary object should seem to be to glorify Himself? Nothing is more beautiful than the way in which He always hides Himself, trusting to our love to find Him. He allowed the light of God to shine through Him, leaving it to His Heavenly Father and to the interior working of the Holy Spirit

to cause that dawn in the mind of His disciples which broke forth in the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." He appeals more to our heart and understanding when He calls Himself the Son of Man, than if He were to say: "Behold Me; I am God incarnate."

VII

SPIRIT AND MATTER

A preliminary enquiry.

Before studying the Great Mysteries one by one, it is a very important preliminary to consider the relation between spiritual and material things. As a question of doctrine, the Catholic view of this relation is distinguished from that of all other forms of religion: as an explanation of the universe, it is distinguished from all other forms of philosophy. It is hardly too much to say that most of the objections against Catholic forms of worship proceed from a misunderstanding or deliberate rejection of the Christian teaching about the material world and its relation to the spiritual.

Grades of Reality.

Indeed, we have to be on our guard against a very curious tendency to treat the word "spiritual" as conveying a less real meaning, something metaphorical, something that can be put aside in favour of the "literal." In Holy Scripture, the word "spiritual" *never* means that: it always implies a reality higher than that of

the material world. Therefore once more we set before our mind the four grades of reality :

1. The Essential.
2. The Spiritual.
3. The Material.
4. The Subjective.

Looking at this Jacob's Ladder of existences, we see at once the reason for that ubiquitous downward drift and upward striving mentioned in a previous chapter, and we then learn the enormous difference the Incarnation has made to the universe. The Infinite and Essential Reality remains of course without change or shadow of alteration. The other three are always going up or down. The spiritual has yearnings towards the Divine, but when entangled with matter shares in its incessant falling away. The material, as we have learned from St. Paul, is always passing away and yet blindly groans and travails towards the higher hope. The subjective, i.e., our feelings, fancies, dreams, thoughts and intentions, are nothing in themselves, nor do they become "things" until they have expressed themselves in some external form. Their upward striving results, for example, in works of art, and the artist then calls the process creation, because he has given to airy nothing a local habitation and a name.

Meaning of Incarnation. Now the Incarnation means that God has entered His own creation, not from above, but from below, annihilating Himself (*Lat.* semetipsum exinanivit ; *Gr.* ekenose), and from below upholding all things by the Word of

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His Power, embracing and lifting them all with Himself into the Divine Nature, that God may be all in all. Just as Lucifer, flaming with pride, hurled himself from above into the lower creation, trying to drag it all with him to perdition ; so Jesus Christ, veiled with humility, rises from below, touching and transforming all things as He rises, sacrificing Himself to lift all creation to the glory of God. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all things unto myself," and "Behold, I make all things new." Lucifer is the leader of all downward drift : Jesus Christ is the Prince of the upward striving.

Effect of Incarnation. The way in which the Incarnate Word makes all things new, is by raising each of the three created realities to a higher grade, literally realizing their ideals. The spiritual is elevated to the Divine (the power to become the sons of God, and partakers of the Divine Nature). The material is raised to the spiritual, the body after the resurrection becoming a "spiritual body," and the "new heavens and new earth" being proportioned thereto. And the desires, thoughts, intentions of our otherwise empty subjective life take upon themselves an eternal permanence of reality in Him from whose grace they proceed and towards whom they are directed. The difference between a merely human life and an Incarnational one is infinitely great.

A Great Analogy. Reverting to our first chapter again, we saw that Nature is full of suggestive analogies, which are more than mere

metaphors because of the intimate brotherhood that unites all creation—a brotherhood so nobly chanted by the Hebrew poets, so affectionately consecrated by our liturgical blessings of palms or candles, so poetically acknowledged by Saints like Francis of Assisi. I do not know any place in the world where this great analogy is more majestically portrayed than in our own Victoria Falls.

Description of the Parable.

Well towards the middle of the Falls there is an island-rock easy of access. If you stand at the eastern end of this, facing the chasm, the sensation is appalling. You see nothing in front of you but an unfathomed abyss, beyond which all is veiled in an impenetrable cloud. On both sides of you everything seems to be plunging into chaos. The very rock on which you stand seems to be about to join the rush. To me the feeling there is not endurable for more than a few seconds at a time.

When, however, you stand at the western point of the rock, you seem to be in a boat pushing its way against an almost irresistible torrent. The shores of the Zambesi are too far away to interfere with this illusion of upward movement. You are victorious over incalculable forces. Safe on the island itself are many forms of life, and at your feet, in the very swirl of the cataract, curious forms of flowering plants, moss-like in appearance, have driven root-like processes into the living rock: and, as I found afterwards, entwined with this network, seemingly in life-partnership, is a tiny thread-like water-weed, which apart

from this protection could not stand the rush of water for a moment. More wonderful still, under the shelter of this double network, there swarm countless little specks of the most helpless thing on earth, the tiny masses of mere protoplasm which we call Amoebas. Over all this you see, walking warily, the higher life of a lovely white crab, who is far more afraid of the abyss than of you, and as long as he is beyond your reach nothing you can do will frighten him into an impulsive movement. The Rock in the midst of the Chaos is the one shelter of all forms of life, from the lowest to the highest.

Then when afterwards you go to the Rain Forest in front of the Falls, if you are fortunate, you see the Rainbow of Hope spanning the Rock of Safety. A marvellous parable !

VIII

THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE

The Parable of the Victoria Falls seems to me to contain four great meanings, not unconnected with each other: (1) the Stream of Creation; (2) the Stream of Time; (3) the Stream of Humanity; (4) The Stream of Thought.

The Stream of Creation.

First let us throw ourselves back to the time when the flood was full, and the Rock was not yet visible. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This we have always understood, as in the Creeds, to mean that God by His mere word formed material and spiritual substances, things visible and invisible, separately but simultaneously. To the spiritual or intellectual beings, the Angels, created in grace, it was at once revealed that their destinies were involved with the chaotic mass below. In God's own way, and in their own way, it was manifested to these Angelic beings, as their probation, that the Divine was going to smite Itself into that gross and despicable

matter, to all appearance rushing irresistibly down to the abyss of nothingness, and that under some such corporal form, utterly inferior, He was to be by them recognized and adored. The faithful Angels believed and obeyed, and entered into the Beatific Vision. But Lucifer and his satellites would not humble their lofty powers and said "Non serviam"—I will not enslave myself to Chaos—and immediately found themselves hurled into the very slavery they were refusing. To their horror and consternation they were flung, tormented with matter, into the bottomless abyss, the place prepared for the devil and his angels. How can mere material things affect spiritual substances? ask the incredulous. What is the use of asking, how can it be, when God says it is? It is an essential part of the Mystery of Sin. For a while Lucifer gained what he sought and has been allowed to become the Prince of this world. The spirits of light and the spirits of darkness watched the chaotic flood, and gradually, as the Spirit brooded over the waters, there came order, and then the marvellous hierarchy of life, until Man was created in grace. Then the Angels of light saw the possibility and promise of what they had believed, and the Angels of darkness began to see to what depths of folly and misery they had doomed themselves. At length the Rock of the Incarnation raised itself above the flood. Angels and Men gathered around it and were formed into the Mystical Body of Christ, and all the rest was plunged into the abyss.

The Stream of Time.

The story of the Universe shows that there is only one thing that has had permanence. First by promise and prophecy, and last by actual fact, the Incarnation has shown itself to be the immovable Centre, while all else has passed away. Empires have gone, institutions have gone, dynasties have gone, conquerors have gone, and the one thing that remains is the House that was builded upon a Rock. As Aubrey de Vere says in his stately hymn :

> Empires rise and sink like billows,
> Vanish, and are seen no more ;
> Glorious as the star of morning
> She o'erlooks the wild uproar.

We see the process going on all around us. Ominous clouds seem to threaten a storm that may sweep away the whole of our boasted civilization. Should that come to pass, there is one thing only that can survive, and that is the Rock against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

The Stream of Humanity.

The countless myriads of human beings of all time pass before our eyes like the appalling processions that Dante saw in the Inferno. In the midst of them stands the Rock of Calvary, the only permanence. There is no other Name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. To all appearance the vast majority, carelessly, unbelievingly, rebelliously, throng the broad

road that leads to death. What secret ways those outstretched arms upon the Cross find to snatch individual souls from the gulf, we do not know. What we do know for ourselves is that, as we are whirled along, unless we cling to the foot of that Cross, we shall ourselves go down into the abyss.

The Stream of Thought.

The Kingdom of Heaven has glorified or subdued all Angels. It has overshadowed all human story. It has its grip from without on every human individual. It is also within us. Even those who have Grace enthroned in their hearts know what a rush of activity sweeps through their minds in all their waking and some of their sleeping hours, and what a large proportion of it goes down uselessly into the gulf of oblivion. No one could or would tell all the absurdities, the follies of vanity, the ebullitions of pride, the murmurings and envies, the little storms of the affections and passions, the sensual desires, the teasing doubts, the day-dreams, the castles in the air, the imaginary quarrels ending in crushing repartees, the inflated imaginings, of even a single day. All this subjective life is wasted unless it fixes itself upon the Rock of the Word Incarnate. Apart from this, even philosophy, art and science are an empty dream. Hence the Church of God, always carrying her theories into the fullest logical practice, equals the Contemplative with the Active. In the Word Incarnate thoughts become deeds. Hermits are as useful as Preachers: a Carmelite Nun is as practical as a sister of Charity. The whole course of meditative prayer throughout the world is the subjective

life of the Bride of Christ, and in Him her Thought no less than her Action is lifted to a plane of Divine Reality.

IX

THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD

Good versus Evil. The concept of the whole state of Creation as a conflict between supernatural Good and preternatural Evil on the field of the merely natural is quite simple, and is of great practical importance to us, because Man is a microcosm (or epitome of the Universe), and the whole conflict is repeated in each individual according to his measure.

Insoluble Problems put aside. Theologians sometimes discuss the question whether there would have been an Incarnation if humanity had not sinned. Such discussion may afford a useful mode of analysing root principles, but in practice it does not lead us anywhere. We might as well debate whether, if Angels had not sinned, Man would have been created. It is futile for creatures to try to place themselves at the point of view of the Creator. There is no time for God. Even when we speak of the *fore*-knowledge of God, we are liable to err unless we remember that the prefix *fore* has refer-

ence only to ourselves. God's Complete Knowledge is communicated to us in proportion to our powers of reception, that is to say, in terms of space and time, of logical inference in thought and of succession in fact. In Him there is no variation. The colours of the spectrum are still true light, though they are only the result of breaking up the completeness of the ray. We are on safe ground as long as we stick to facts, revealed or experienced. For the same reason we may put aside all speculations about the possibilities of other worlds than ours, other conceivable schemes of Redemption, other Incarnations. This earth of ours may be the one lost sheep which the Good Shepherd has come to rescue, leaving flocks that need no redemption; or there may be no other flocks. Our own experience of free will is that wherever it is given there is the possibility and partial actuality of rebellion. Our wisdom is to make the most of what has been revealed to us here and now.

The Principles of the Conflict.

Let us set before our eyes what we know from revelation. (1) There can, of course, be no direct contest between God and creatures. A duel between a microbe and an Archangel would be too feeble an analogy to describe it. The whole fight therefore is between Sin and Grace. Grace is a communication, necessarily finite on our side, of the Divine Nature to Angels or Men. (2) There is a law which in its application to ourselves we call the Transfer of Grace. "My word shall not return to Me void, but shall accomplish that whereto it was sent." "See that no

man take thy crown." The Redeemer took for Himself, among His many crowns, the one that was thrown away by Adam; and the lost crown of Eve was regained by Mary. The whole Mystical Body of Christ receives the crowns rejected by Lucifer and his followers. (3) The Creator respects the free will of His creatures. They are never compelled. What they gain for God, is laid up for them in eternal security: what they gain, even against Him, is never taken away by violence, but only by the operations of Grace. What they lose can be regained only by the processes of Grace. (4) The laws of the conflict are a finite expression of the Will of God, and are never broken. God cannot contradict Himself. Even when we speak of miracle we merely mean that a higher law of Grace has, consistently with itself, overruled a lower law of Nature.

The Conflict Itself. These things premised, we see further that the dominating Centre of Creation is the Incarnate Word. His victory culminated in the Sacrifice of the Cross, and from that victory has proceeded all redeeming Grace. From it (foreseen, as we say) flowed all the graces sent to bring sinners to repentance from the moment of the Fall, and ever after all the Grace and Glory bestowed upon the Bride of Christ in all her members.

The Redeemer Fights and Conquers as Man. It was not as God, but as the Son of Man, that He came to fight this fight and win this victory. And He calls His adversary the Prince of

this world. Why ? Because in the first campaign that adversary had won a temporary victory. In our Lord's own words, " When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth : but if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away the armour wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils." This is a vivid description both of the victory of Satan over Adam and of the victory which Jesus Christ won over Satan. Adam was created in Grace, and was therefore made Lord of this visible world. Satan came against him and overcame him, stripped him of the armour of Grace wherein he trusted, and thenceforward claimed to distribute the spoils of his forfeited dominion. Therefore our Lord calls him Prince of this world. The fight is still going on, for Satan, though defeated, is still wrangling for what he calls his own. No violence is done to him, but his spoils are continuously being taken from him by the processes of Grace, thing after thing, body after body, soul after soul. His kingdom is being gradually by Grace divided against itself and therefore shall not stand.

Divine Chivalry. There is a Divine chivalry on the side of God's Champion. He never abuses His enemy. He calls him Lucifer, and admits his claims of possession. The Son of Man would not express the Wrath of God. With perfect calm He endured all that the Powers of Evil could do to Him, so overruling all things that they could do nothing but work out their own damnation. This is powerfully expressed in Christian Art. The Griffin, being

a union of the eagle and the lion, the king of birds and the king of beasts, typical of Heaven and Earth, symbolizes the Incarnation, while the Dragon is the universal emblem of Evil. Lombard Architecture, as is explained in Ruskin's subtle analysis, shows the Griffin crouching in an attitude of repose, grasping in its talons a dragon so firmly that it can only turn and bite its own wing. From the first page of Genesis to the last page of the Apocalypse, the Dragon or Serpent of Evil has always been killing itself by its own poison.

Christ and the Demons. The whole Gospel story illustrates these principles. Whether it be sin, or actual obsession, or diseases thought to be obsession, or simple cases of known disease, our Lord "casts out the devil." Out of Mary of Magdala He "cast out seven devils," and cast them out so completely that she stands in Grace by the side of the Immaculate. In cases of actual obsession, the demons grovelled before Him, but He refused their testimony and drove them out. In one case they asked permission to enter a herd of swine. He scornfully gave them leave. Swine, being forbidden as food, were of no use to the people of God. He was not going to contend with demons over swine. He let them do what they would with their own. Their motive of course was to bring Him into disfavour, and they temporarily succeeded, for the people came and, to their own immense loss, besought Him to depart from their coasts. It was nothing to Him—He was going to let them do to Him much worse things than that.

There were epileptic cases, attributed to obsession. What mattered the popular mistake to Him? He overcame in them the power of Satan. There was the poor woman crippled with rheumatism: He cured her as one "whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years."

The taint of Satan's Kingdom. As the result of his victory in Eden, Satan gained a hold on the souls of men, on the bodies of men, and over the visible creation. They were not corrupted in their nature, unless they themselves participated in his sin: but the mere fact that they were his unfitted them for use in the Kingdom of Heaven. The taint extended, and still extends, to all earthly things that have not been captured for the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore our Lord blessed, not only the Bread and Wine for the Eucharist, but all food which he either gave or received. Therefore, following in His footsteps, the Catholic Church blesses, and bids us bless, all the food we receive, all the things we use—our farms and houses, our beasts of burden, our carriages, railways, aeroplanes, everything. She is distributing the spoils. She forms objects for sacred use—vestments, scapulars, medals, pictures—and gives them a double blessing, negatively to remove the taint, positively to turn them into channels of Grace. She even blesses the whole countryside by shrines, crosses, statues. In a word, she is doing what she can to make the whole world Incarnational.

The Church's Blessings. If anybody thinks I am overstating in saying that everything on earth is tainted until it is blessed, let him read the form for blessing holy water. Both the salt and the water are first *exorcised* and then commingled and given Incarnational power and put at the disposal of the faithful as a weapon against the Powers of Evil. Those Catholics who neglect these externalities, or even think the Church " old-fashioned " in the use of them, lose a great deal of Grace and display very imperfect knowledge of the principles of their Faith. Sometimes they are ashamed of these practices because outsiders ridicule them as superstition. What does it matter what noise they make down in the Valley of the Shadow of Death ? What our Lord approved is for ever worthy of approval and practice. And for His Bride, she retains perennial youth and never do her ways become old-fashioned.

X

THE TAINT ON HUMANITY

The taint on Matter. We have seen, then, that Satan's victory over Humanity gave him as his spoils the Princedom of this world, and a hold over the soul and the body of man. It did not give him the power to degrade the nature of things. He could not force actual corruption on the soul of man. That would be a victory over God. His victory was only over Adam. Nevertheless there is a taint in his very touch. In the last chapter we saw how this taint is removed from things we need. As a mother tells her children they must not receive sweets from a stranger, not because there is anything wrong with the sweets, but because of possible danger in the giver, so our Heavenly Father bids us take nothing but what comes to us from the Incarnate Word. Every child of Grace has the power by blessing to adapt the things he needs to the service of the Incarnation. He just signs the cross upon them, the symbol of Christ's victory, and says, "The Lord hath need of them," and thus transforms material objects into channels of Grace.

Original Sin. The taint on Humanity goes deeper. Souls which were intended to enter upon existence endowed with supernatural dignity, and bodies which were intended to be lifted up to a plane of spirituality so as to be in complete harmony with their souls, undoubtedly incur great loss if debarred from these privileges. They lose nothing of their nature, but because they are born into the kingdom of this world and under the dominion of its Prince, they suffer disgrace and taint. This taint is called Original Sin. It does not become actual sin unless and until the soul deliberately adheres to the rebellion into the midst of which it has been born.

Redemption of the Soul. The work of Redemption begins with the translation of a human personality from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Light. The laws of this process are very clearly made known to us. They are different for the soul and for the body. The soul, being simple in substance, can be, and is, redeemed in a flash. If at death it is in the state of grace, its redemption is complete. It may have to wait awhile in the Porch of the Temple to be purified of external stains, but it will lose nothing there of its supernatural life, nor can it add anything thereto : its redemption is complete.

Redemption of the Body. It is otherwise with the body. Being complex, all its processes are gradual. As St. Paul says, we are still waiting for the redemption of the body. Its invariable doom for Original Sin is a permanent possibility of interior

temptation during life, and a passage through death and corruption as the only way of entering into the Glory of God. Even St. John the Baptist, who was consecrated before birth, and of whom our Lord said glorious words granted to no other man, had to undergo this doom and is still awaiting the fullness of his bodily redemption. God never breaks His own laws.

The Immaculate Conception.

From this law we see clearly how essential to the Plan of Redemption were the original privileges conferred on the Mother of the Redeemer. If Mary had no higher grace than St. John the Baptist, her body would have to pass through the common doom, and her Child would have had to take flesh from a flesh unregenerated. The only way to guard the Redeemer against the slur of such an unworthy origin, was for Him to grant His Mother the supreme redemption, that would not delete but forestall in her the taint of sin. The foreseen victory of the Cross gave to the second Eve the same original grace that had been the privilege of the first. Mary became the *Hortus inclusus* where the Prince of this world had no claims, and into this Paradise the second Adam entered to renew with entire independence the fight of Humanity against the Adversary.

The Secret of the King.

There are reasons for thinking that this Garden enclosed was jealously protected against even the knowledge of the Evil One. The intellect of angels is not infinite, and the fact seems to be revealed to us that Satan

was uncertain. His temptations begin with "*If* thou be the Son of God." We can easily imagine that a spiritual cordon surrounded the life of the Mother for the sake of the Son. Some of the Fathers give as one reason of her marriage to St. Joseph that the secret of the Virginal Birth might remain unknown to the demons. This Angelic guard around the Maiden would of course lead the Adversary to suspect: but he was not allowed to know. The Redeemer meant to fight him on the plane of Humanity.

The Assumption. These considerations perhaps throw some light on the belief in Mary's Assumption. It is quite universal in the Church of God, and the faithful often wonder why the doctrine has not been defined. The only question about it is whether it is an accessory fact after the full Revelation, or whether it was contained essentially in that Revelation as the stamens are contained in a flower-bud. Personally I cherish the hope that the Church will some day say, perhaps even before the Vatican Council closes, that in accordance with this law of bodily redemption the end of Mary's earthly life is as much a part of the Divine Plan of Redemption as the beginning. Without the Assumption, Christ's victory for His Church on earth is nowhere yet complete. And, moreover, without the Assumption the original sanctity of Mary's body would miss its connatural complement.

Asceticism. If this were a treatise of moral as well as intellectual theory, one might deduce from this law of bodily redemption the whole doctrine of the value of sacrifice, of mortification (which really is only the obverse of the medal of vivification), and of all that asceticism to which Christendom has devoted so many volumes. It would show how in all saintly lives, whether in social sweetness like that of our Lord or in stern asceticism like that of St. John the Baptist, Wisdom is justified of her children. But we must pass on to the Mysteries.

XI

THE FIRST MYSTERY—THE BLESSED TRINITY

Method. My purpose is not to prove the Mystery, but to show the mode of its revelation. In the case of each Mystery there is a long series of hints, shadows, suggestive expressions, types, figures, symbols and startling ideas, which prepare the mind for something that it could not otherwise have expected.

Some plurality in the one Godhead. The Second and New Creation is represented to us as the result of a Divine Council in which God the Father sends His Son to rebuild the structure which Adam had ruined, and sends His Spirit to animate the work. The story of the First Creation is quite parallel. God creates us by His Word, and His Spirit moves upon the face of the waters. "And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image." Critics of course say that the first chapter of Genesis is a survival of the polytheistic times before Abraham. That is not the point. It is not a question of whether God uses pre-existing material,

but what use He makes of that material. We take all our teaching from our Lord Jesus Christ, and He vouched for every jot and tittle of the Law. The point is that God chose a certain people to be the repository of His Oracles, that His Providence so arranged that their very life and history and all their literature should be prophetic of the coming Redemption, and that this people, passionately monotheistic, placed in the very forefront of their message an account of Creation which implies some sort of plurality in the Godhead.

Divine Manifestations. To keep alive the hope of the coming Redeemer, God "appeared" from time to time in the Old Dispensation under various symbols,—the human form, the burning bush, the gentle voice, etc. Granted, however, that these symbols may have been, as St. Paul seems to say, "by the hands of Angels," nevertheless the revelation was direct. And in the inspired account we see a distinction made between the One who sends and the One who is sent: and the One who is sent demands and receives Divine homage. In such cases the word "Angel" sometimes seems to mean more than a created spirit. Indeed, the prophesied Messias is actually called "The Angel of the Great Council" in the LXX version of Isaias: and in Malachi He is "the Angel of the Covenant." In the immensely important forward move establishing the Covenant with Abraham, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am Almighty God." In continuation of this revelation, the appearance was under the suggestive symbol of "three men," who nevertheless speak as one, namely, "the Lord."

Again, the effect of all these Theophanies, or Divine appearances, is evidently to imply some kind of plurality in the One Godhead, and the number suggested is Three.

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

The Evangelist-Prophet, Isaias, was vouchsafed a symbolical view of the worship in Heaven, and he heard the Angels chanting their threefold adoration, Holy, Holy, Holy. Suggestive as this is by itself, its significance is enhanced by the repetition of it in the Vision of St. John, where the Trisagion is sung before the Threefold Presence on the Throne of Light. Add to this the perpetual echo of it on earth in the Christian Liturgies.

Hebraism?

Critics say it is a mere Hebraism. We may dispute their adjective. The Hebrew Race was chosen to be (if I may use the term) a composite prophet, in its covenant, in its life and history, in its whole literature, in its worship; is it surprising, then, if its linguistic idioms sometimes contain meanings beyond themselves? There are many instances in the New Testament where what seemed to be "merely Hebraic" parallels are seen to be in reality distinct and fruitful pairs. Take the highest of them. When Mary sang, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," she was uttering a "mere Hebraism"; but on her lips, with the new Mystery within her, that song reveals unfathomable depths to those whose delight it is to scrutinize the Mysteries.

The Word and the Spirit. Even a casual reading of the Old Testament reveals a triplicity running throughout,—the Lord, the Word of the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord. Hebraism, the critics say again. Of course: but is it not strange that all these Hebraisms point the same way? The whole of Christianity is a Divine Hebraism. When long afterwards St. John pointed the meaning by his doctrine of the Word (Logos), critics say he borrowed it from Philo, the philosopher who tried to Platonize Judaism. But where did Philo get it? He found it flaming throughout Holy Writ. And was St. John, the great Poet-Mystic and Apostle, less sensitive to Divine meanings? As likely as not, St. John never heard of Philo. But even Philo is useful as showing how a highly intellectual and enthusiastic Jew caught a glimmering of a plurality in the Godhead from the prophecies.

Striking Expressions. I add some sentences which are, to say the least, startling in a monotheistic revelation. Psalm 2: "The Lord and his Christ (Anointed)": to the latter is promised universal dominion, and to Him it is said, "Thou art my Son." Psalm 32: "By the Word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the Spirit of his mouth." Psalm 44: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.... Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee." Psalm 103: "Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created." Psalm 109 (the text to which our Lord Himself appealed): "The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou at my right hand."

The Book of Wisdom, the fore-runner of the whole doctrine of the Logos, says in chapter 9 : " And who shall know thy thought except thou give Wisdom and send thy Holy Spirit from above " : it had already described the " Wisdom that sitteth by thy throne." To give one more out of many, the noble prayer of the son of Sirach in Ecclesiasticus (Chapter 51) says : " I will give glory to thee, O Lord, O King ; and I will praise thee, O God my Saviour. . . . I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord."

Were the Symbols Heeded ?

If, as we have seen in the case of Philo, these symbolic foreshadowings appealed intellectually to thinkers, it might be expected that far closer approximations would be made by the more spiritual stars that gathered round the Dawn. Thus the Angel Gabriel, revealing to Mary the immediate flowering of the Mystery of the Incarnation, *presupposed* in her a knowledge of the Trinity : " The *Lord* is with thee : . . . The *Holy Ghost* shall overshadow thee . . . and therefore the Holy One that is born of thee shall be called the *Son of God.*" Thus again when our Lord was baptized (an event described by all four Evangelists), St. John the Baptist knew at once what was meant by the Lamb of God before him, the voice of the Father, and the Dove of the Holy Spirit. Finally St. John the Evangelist, whose knowledge both of the Baptist and of the Blessed Virgin was deeply intimate, renewed in his great Apocalypse all the symbols of the Old Testament along with all the Realities of the New, showing that in a worship which must necessarily be

symbolical, there is no use in its being symbolical unless it is also real.

The Definite Announcement.

When our Lord came, in His own gracious way, He showed the Truth by facts, before He put it into words. He first revealed the Father, and made it evident to His disciples that from the Creation to the Incarnation was the Dispensation of the Father : that His own life on earth was the Dispensation of the Son : that the future was to be the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost : that He was one with the Father : that He Himself was God: that the Holy Spirit is God : and that God is One. Then He sent His disciples to baptize the world with the completed formula, " In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." With that formula, the Supreme Truth, we renew, as it were, our baptism every time we bless ourselves.

XII

THE SECOND MYSTERY,—THE INCARNATION

The Primeval Promise.

Immediately after the Fall of Man, the conflict between Grace and Sin was continued on a new basis. On God's principle, "My word shall not return to me void but shall accomplish that whereto it was sent," the supernatural headship of Adam and the supernatural Motherhood of Eve were re-established in a higher form. The temporary victory of Satan extended only over the things of this world: the things of Grace were not among his spoils. Therefore the new Hope was at once revealed, both to Humanity and to the Enemy, in the picture of the Woman and her Child, and the Serpent. In this appeal to the imagination of men we see the first symbol of the Redemption which was then not only promised but actually begun. The victorious Sacrifice was already being offered up by "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world." So vividly did this picture speak to the all-embracing mind of St. John, that he places it again in his final Visions of the

Apocalypse,—the Woman clothed with the sun, her Child, and the Serpent. It was in a certain manner, as we shall see hereafter, the same Woman, the same Child, and the same Enemy. The Mystery of the Woman is that of universal motherhood, and we shall consider it in the next chapter. It is the Mystery of the Child that fills our minds now. This was the first promise of the Messiah (the Anointed), the Prophet, Priest and King who was coming as Son of Man to redeem and restore, not by the compulsive power of Omnipotence, but by the persuasive processes of Grace.

The Patriarchs. When mankind, unfaithful to the Covenant of Hope, fell away almost universally, there came the Flood in which only Noe and his family were saved. With them the Covenant was renewed, and as a sort of sign manual the rainbow was chosen to be a symbolic promise of its perpetuity. After a while, Abraham was chosen as the instrument of a new development of the idea. It was carried on through Isaac, the child of promise, the child also of the vicarious sacrifice. Esau rejected it, bartering it for a mess of pottage, and in God's mysterious way it was transferred to Jacob, who gave his symbolic name Israel to the chosen race. He passed it on to Judah. With every transference fresh light is thrown on the doctrine of the Hope.

Moses and the Prophets. Moses is reckoned in some way as the greatest of the Prophets, because he not only typified the Redeemer, leading

the chosen people from the land of bondage through the miraculously prophetic wilderness to the Promised Land, but also was the Law-giver arranging the life and worship of Israel " according to the pattern shown him in the Mount." Other Prophets spoke in words; Moses spoke in symbols,—the Paschal Lamb, the holy of holies, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the emblem of the brazen serpent.

In the Promised Land, the Covenant was renewed with David, whose poetic genius was consecrated to the expression of the devotion of God's people for all time. To him was vouchsafed a vision of the suffering Redeemer, which is absolutely startling in its realism. It is found in that Psalm beginning with the words, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? " These words were uttered by our Lord upon the Cross in the most unfathomable depth of His Passion, thus, even in that agony still our Teacher, claiming the literal fulfilment of that marvellous prophecy. Long after David, Prophet after Prophet, from Isaias to Malachi and beyond, contributed each his share to the great Messianic Ideal, until at last the Reality came.

The Character of the Ideal. If I were arguing with an opponent, I should have to cite passage after passage with all sorts of answers to objections. I am here taking, with those who believe, a bird's-eye view of the dawning process. There have been many books written on this significance of the Old Testament Scriptures. In English, Father Maas, S.J., has given us two solid volumes which may be consulted by those who want the details (*Christ in Type and Pro-*

phecy). Suffice it here and now to say, putting all the pictorial touches together, that the Messias, the very time of whose coming was not obscurely defined, was to be born of a Virgin, at Bethlehem, that His name was to be Jesus or Saviour, that he was to have a forerunner, that He was to be Teacher and Master, and was to teach in parables, and to work miracles. He was to establish a new and everlasting Covenant. He was to bring the Reign of Peace, and yet to be a Warrior and Conqueror. His life was to be one of humiliation, poverty and obscurity: yet He was to be Prince, Lord and eternal King. He was to be a legislator, abrogating the Mosaic Law and bringing the whole Gentile world to His sway. His Passion is described in amazing detail,—betrayed, taken and bound, deserted by disciples, silent before the judge, insulted and struck, crucified, mocked on the Cross, dying the death of a malefactor, His side pierced with a lance, His very garments gambled for. And yet, as we have already seen, words are used of Him and names given to Him which cannot without blasphemy be given to any creature. The difficulty was, and the essence of the Mystery lay in this, that all these things had to be true *together*. The Jews selected from God's Word those things which they preferred to believe (the very definition of heresy), and looked for one who should establish a kingdom on earth for *them*, although it was clearly foretold that His Victory, and therefore His Peace, was to be for Heaven, not primarily for earth, and was to be universal and not merely for the standard-bearers. The result was that they fell away from the Mystery, and have now fallen away even from the

symbols. They have lost their sacrificial worship, and have given up their Messianic Hope.

The Reality. The Infinite alone can reconcile paradoxes. Even the mathematical infinite is fertile in statements which to all appearances are impossibly true together. Any true view of the real Infinite is to us necessarily paradoxical. Our logic cannot measure the Godhead. So when Christ came, He reconciled all things in Himself. He fulfilled, and transcended, all the prophecies. In that wonderful conversation on the way to Emaus, the talk which of all others, we could wish to have more fully recorded, He said, " O foolish, and in your hearts slow to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken ! " It must be remembered that His Mystery is twofold,—true God *and* true Man. He did not wish so to reveal His Godhead as to make them disbelieve in His Humanity. His humility laid stress on His being the Son of Man. Yet He told the truth to those who had the right to know. " He thought it no robbery to be equal with God," but He did say that He and His Father were one, that He would send the Holy Spirit from the Father, that " the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost " was the right way of naming the Godhead. He received and allowed Divine homage, and demanded from all men that total service of faith, hope and charity which God alone has the right to demand. Even with all His humble self-repression, it is significant that the first heresies denied, not His Divinity but the reality of His Manhood. Nothing can more clearly show that our Lord's way of teaching was the best way,—

namely, to prepare the mind by type and symbol, and then to give a firm hold on *both* sides of a Mystery before putting it into finite words.

XIII

THE THIRD MYSTERY,—THE CHURCH

Variety of Aspect.

This Mystery is, of all the four, the most varied in form, and, according to the point of view chosen, may be called the Mystery of the Kingdom, or of Grace, or of Divine Sonship, or of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or of the Mystical Body, or of the Bride of Christ. It is the victory of Grace over Sin looked at from the standpoint of universal Humanity. So essential is its relation to the Mystery of the Incarnation that from the beginning the two are always revealed together.

Mystery or Metaphor?

Since the Word Incarnate came as Conqueror, Priest and King, and that not as God but as the Son of Man, it follows that through all the ages He must have an Army to fight under His banner, a People to be sanctified, a Kingdom over which to reign. If now we are united to Him only by moral and spiritual ties, if His sacrifice has redeemed us from without, if as a separate indi-

vidual He has by His Divine help enabled us to be obedient and devoted and loyal merely as separate individuals ourselves, if He has bound His disciples together merely externally as this world binds its inhabitants into empires and religions, this would indeed be an infinite mercy, but it would not be a mystery. We can understand kingdoms and races and modes of belief, and even when these are personified we find the metaphor quite intelligible. If that were all, since we can make metaphors for ourselves, we might arrange ourselves in different groups and call ourselves Churches. And that of course is what is done by those who have denied the Mystery. But if the process of union is supernatural; if the Word Incarnate has created a Divine Organism, of which we are integral molecules or cells, an Organism whose laws and powers are beyond our comprehension; if an *identity* has been established between Him and His followers which is as far beyond our imitation as it is beyond our understanding, then we are face to face with Mystery: we must take the shoes from off our feet, for we are standing on holy ground. We must not touch the Ark with unconsecrated hand. But, as we have seen, we gather from the mode of revelation, from its prophetic whispers, from its frequent repetition, from its urgency and impressiveness, from its variety of type and symbol, from its enthusiasm and glory, from its daring paradox and superhuman claims, and eventually from the very words of God made man and His inspired disciples, that we are in a realm of Mystery where human power and thought sink into insignificance. Indeed, it is hard to think that Almighty God

would enter His own creation as a creature and then confine all mystery to Himself. Surely He came to lift our nothingness to Reality and not merely to teach us a superior kind of Poetry.

The Woman and Her Seed. The Protevangelion (the first Gospel) of Genesis reveals the universal War and Victory as between the Woman and her Seed on one side and the Serpent on the other. Who is this Woman? After the fullness of the Incarnational and Pentecostal revelation, St. John in his apocalyptic vision gives us the same picture,—the Woman clothed with the sun and crowned with twelve stars with her Son on the one side, and the Dragon on the other. Who again is the Woman? In the latter case, the Church of God and her multitudinous offspring; in the former case an individual woman, Mary, and her individual Son, the Redeemer. And yet between the two cases there is this connexion, that one group (Apocalypse) is an extension of the other (Genesis). And thus the two are but one. If anybody says he cannot see how one individual woman can have any sort of identity with a woman of such universality as the Church, then let him wonder too how the one individual Christ can have developed into a mystic Christ made up of the Redeemer and the redeemed.

Every child of the Catholic Church who says his rosary knows and feels that the triumph of Mary in the last two mysteries is the same thing as the triumph of the whole heavenly Jerusalem on earth. Did ever any single person think or speak of Arianism or Donatism or Lutheranism or Calvinism or Anglicanism or

Wesleyanism or any other man-made Schism as his Mother ?

The Chosen People. The children of the Patriarchs, to whom the new Covenant was given and confirmed, were not only the bearers of the Hope of the Redeemer, but were themselves the type of His Kingdom. The whole of their history, as St. Paul said, " happened to them in figure and was written down for our instruction." Their miraculous Baptism in the Red Sea, their manna in the wilderness, their pillar of cloud and of fire, their whole liturgy of worship formed after the pattern shown on the mount, was one long picture painted by Divine Providence of the Messianic kingdom to come.

The Prophets. As time went on, the idea of the Kingdom became clearer and clearer along with the idea of the Messias. It was to be spiritual, it was to be visible, it was to be universal, it was to be eternal, it was to be Divine. There is a parallelism between what is said of the Redeemer in the Old Testament and what is said of His Kingdom, that puts both into the same region of the Divine. If this were a book of controversy, I could cite hundreds of corroborative passages : I am only indicating the line of thought to those who know their Scripture.

The Gospel. When Our Lord came, there were two predominant ideas in His teaching, " My Father " and " the Kingdom of Heaven." The latter was the subject of most of His parables and

metaphors,—it was the True Vine, the City set on a hill, the light on the candlestick, the leaven to influence the world, it was a voice to be obeyed, it was a temple, and it was "within you." It was as if one seeing a great Reality should try to describe it for those who cannot see, and should use unlimited variety of simile; the important thing would be that all these metaphorical descriptions should be true *together*, and that none should be pushed beyond the meaning of the revealer. A "Branch theory" might suit the parable of the Vine, but it would not suit the figure of the Mystical Body. St. Paul's "branch theory" was that if a twig had been cut off it was to be regrafted on to the original stock. The Reality which our Lord was describing was still, as a visible supernatural phenomenon, in the future. He was still prophesying and promising. As St. Augustine put it, the Apostles saw the Mystery of the Incarnation and believed in the Mystery of the Church which they could not yet see: we see the Mystery of the Church and from her learn to believe in the Mystery of the Incarnation which we have not seen.

Mary and the Third Mystery.

Yet, if they had but known it, the fullness had already been sent from Heaven. The Angel Gabriel, in announcing the Divine Motherhood, not only revealed, as we have seen, the Mystery of the Trinity, but also promised the eternal Kingdom of David; and when Mary said: "Be it done unto me according to thy word," the Incarnate Word immediately began His life on earth, and simultaneously created the Third

Mystery in its fullest representative with the potency of universal Motherhood. For a while the Fourth Mystery was also adumbrated in that mystical union whereby the sum total of all Revelation is imparted in all its perfection to every child of God. Holy Communion is a Divine echo of Motherhood.

XIV

THE THIRD MYSTERY AS DIVINE SONSHIP

Fatherhood. We have already considered the evolution of the idea of Divine Fatherhood as a basis of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity ; but our Lord in His revelation of it laid even more stress on our sonship than on His own. Sometimes He links the two together, " My Father and your Father," as if they were distinguishable yet identical in the same Mystery. For Mystery it is, not Metaphor, as is shown again by the age-long steady addition of converging thought and symbol, until at last the clear enunciation shapes the idea and places it above all reasonable misconception.

As both Metaphor and Mystery. That in a sense God is Father of all His intelligent creatures is a quite natural truth. Within that sense all angels good or bad, all men good or bad, are equally included, and this sense is by no means neglected in the Gospel teaching. Our Father sending His

blessings on the unjust as well as the just is shown to us as a model for our own action. But this is only a natural starting-point for a supernatural transformation. It is, and always remains, a sonship that unites us all : but there is also a sonship that divides. There is a " partaking of the Divine Nature," a " begetting in the Word of truth," " that we should be *called* and should *be* sons of God," " for whosoever are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God." The phrases just quoted show how St. Peter, St. James, St. John and St. Paul are unanimous in emphasizing the mystery. It was also adumbrated by the Prophets. One says, " In the place where it shall be said to them : You are not my people ; it shall be said to them : Ye are the sons of the living God."

The Fullest Assertion of it.

At the beginning of his Gospel St. John seems determined to speak so clearly as to prevent any metaphorical interpretation. People might say that, when God calls us His sons, the filiation of nature is of course out of the question ; but we have legal ways of creating sonship by adoption, and St. Paul actually uses this metaphor. Moreover in common parlance we use the word " son " for citizenship or discipleship or other social ties. These metaphors St. John rejects as a full explanation, and he words the sentence with care and completeness. The notion, frequently implied, that St. Paul and St. John were emotional and exuberant writers, is very wide of the mark. No other men have ever charged their human speech with so much reality. In this case, see how St. John ticks off

the metaphors one by one that he may emphasize the real truth. "He came unto his own and his own received him not: but as many as received him, he gave them *power to be made* the sons of God, to them that believe in his name, who are *born* (1) not of blood, (2) nor of the will of the flesh, (3) nor of the will of man, but (4) *of God.*"

The Mode of the New Birth. To be born of or into an Incarnational organism necessarily connotes an Incarnational process, nor need we be surprised that for this process God has chosen Water. In the world's story, water has always been the beginning of life. Therefore the Mystery of Baptism is an essential part of the Mystery of Divine Sonship. Once more, that it is a mystery and not a mere symbolic ceremony, is borne in upon us by the cloud of types and prophecies leading up to the unmistakable announcement in its due season. In the beginning the Spirit moved upon the face of the Waters. In the time of Noe, the Ark saved humanity in the Waters that covered the earth. The Israelites were "baptized" in the Waters of the Red Sea. There was the Water struck from the Rock in the wilderness. There were "the purifications of the Jews," whose purport was so far understood that, when the Baptist came, they challenged his right to baptize, as if the process had a sacred and inviolable meaning. There was also the very significant episode of Naaman the leper being cleansed in the waters of the Jordan,—with its comment for modern shrinking from the humiliation and simplicity of God's chosen mode:

"If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it: how much rather what he now hath said to thee, Wash and thou shalt be clean." The Jordan was superior to Abana and Pharphar only in its mystic significance as the stream in which Baptism itself was to be consecrated.

The Magna Charta of Baptism.

The supernatural character of Baptism is shown by the immense importance attributed to it in the forefront of St. John's Gospel. The Baptism of John was not a symbol chosen by himself: it was specially revealed to him, and was asserted by him as the link between the Old Testament shadows and the New Testament reality. "And I knew him not; but he who sent me to baptize with water, said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, he it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And when there was a dispute between the Pharisees and his disciples as to the relation between his baptism and the purifications of the Old Law, and they told him that Christ was now baptizing, John replied, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy, because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." In the 3rd chapter of St. John, however, we have the mystery announced with clear-cut precision. Nicodemus came to our Lord by night, and to him as a master in Israel the revelation was made,—prefaced, as our Lord's manner was, with His chosen asseveration. "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be

born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." By expressing the crudest interpretation, Nicodemus tried to get the metaphor (as he thought it) explained. And if it had been only a metaphor, it would have been explained. That too was our Lord's way, and indeed the way of every good teacher. But the only answer was, "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of Water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The Teaching Perpetuated. No wonder that from the beginning the Church of God revered the mystery of Baptism and saw in it her own source of life. "He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost" (Titus iii.) "Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life." Therefore the newly baptized were called *illuminati*, i.e. endowed with the light of faith, with probably an allusion to the *initiation* which opened for them the door to the Mystery of the Eucharist. In Hebrews vi. there is a graphic sketch of the outer and inner life of the Christian: "Those who were once illuminated (Baptism), have tasted also the heavenly gift (Communion), and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost (Confirmation), have moreover tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come." The Liturgy, in its blessing of the Font at Easter and Pentecost, with its beautiful prayers for the neophytes, carries the teaching through the centuries. St. Ambrose, with all the Fathers, puts the mystery very high when (in *De*

Mysteriis) he says, "If therefore the Holy Spirit overshadowing the Virgin wrought the beginning of the Incarnation, it is certainly not to be doubted that overshadowing the font and those who are baptized He works for them the reality of the new birth."

XV

THE THIRD MYSTERY AS THE MYSTICAL BODY

Analogy and Mystery.

Things beyond our experience can be explained to us only by analogies. Such analogies cannot be validly or usefully given except by those who know both the thing to be revealed and the thing used in order to reveal it. Until we have experience of our own, we may be guided by an analogy, but we cannot extend the analogy, nor can we invent a new one, nor above all can we argue from mere analogy. You may try to explain colour to a blind man who has never been able to see it : you may tell him that to sight the colour *red* is what shrillness or loudness is in sound. But the blind man will not be able to say how far the likeness holds, nor will he be able to say how the other colours can be symbolized. So with Mysteries. If a mystery were purely spiritual and an angel were to come and tell us about it, we could only vaguely discern his meaning from his words. But if he gave us different

analogies, and if he compared them with one another, and if he argued from his analogies to our ideas, we should learn a great deal more. Even then our apprehension would be small.

The Process of Revelation.

But the Mysteries which Christ brought into the world are not purely spiritual: they are Incarnational. They have a visible as well as a Divine side. And the visible in this case is more than an analogy: it is an image. There is thus a much wider range of apprehension open to us. First of all, we take analogies only from those who know the Divine side,—that is, Christ Himself and those whom He inspires. Then we put together all the analogies, and carefully refrain from interpreting one of them so as to clash with another. If these analogies are repeated with more and more emphasis, if the mode of their utterance becomes more and more sublime, our thought of the Mystery rises higher and higher. We are led like Dante through all the stages of mortal being until we stand at the summit of creation face to face with Infinitude. Thus the Kingdom of God is revealed to us as a visible Empire,—which we more or less understand. Anything further told to us can take nothing away from the fact that it is a visible Empire. It is then added that this Kingdom is within us. We therefore know that it transcends all earthly Empires. We do not take our choice between the two statements: they are true *together*. Further, we learn that this Kingdom is *a Life*, into which we are to be supernaturally (Incarnationally) *born*, in which we are to be

Incarnationally *nourished*, by which we are to be *transformed* into heights utterly beyond our ken. Still it is the same Kingdom. Yet again, we are told that it is an Organism. It is a Vine, of which we are all branches, useless when separated from it unless we be re-grafted into it. It is a Temple, " not made with hands," a living Temple, " built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in which all the building, being framed together, *groweth* up into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit." This was not enough. Beyond mere organic life, beyond all living forms of art, it is a *Body*, human and divine, with all its multiplicity of members under one Head, Christ Jesus, and with one Heart animated by the Holy Spirit. It is even, here on earth, considered as a Human-Divine Personality, the Bride of Christ and the universal Mother. All these " analogies " are crowded upon us in endless profusion in Holy Scripture, and are announced to us in words of such boundless enthusiasm and such sublime exaltation, that we must be blind and deaf to the spiritual world if we do not recognise that we are in the presence of Infinitude on earth.

St. John and St. Paul.

Of the three aspects, (1) Kingdom, (2) Life, (3) Organism, we have seen that the first was the favourite topic of conversation with our Lord, and the forty days after the Resurrection were spent in final instructions about it. The second aspect was more beautifully and

more profoundly taught by St. John than by anybody else, as we saw in the last chapter. The third aspect, the Mystical Body, was revealed to St. Paul with special intensity and became by far the chief point in his teaching.

Summary of St. Paul's Teaching. He called it *the* mystery of the Gospel, or sometimes *my* mystery. He settled all his controversies by it. He based all his moral teaching upon it. This was to him the length and breadth and height and depth of all Christian teaching. "As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another" (Rom. xii.). "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body; so also is Christ" (1 Cor. xii.). In fact he sometimes uses the name "Christ" for the whole Mystical Body, as in this last quotation. I believe that when he wishes to confine our thoughts to our Lord's individuality, he names Him Jesus; when he says "Christ," he universalizes Him. For example, "I fill up in my body those things which are wanting in the sufferings of Christ."

Especially in the "Ephesians." It is in the Epistle to the Ephesians that he lifts the Mystery to its greatest height. I cannot believe that this Epistle is a "circular" one. There is an intensity about it corresponding to his personal relations with that Church, and if it were an encyclical,

why should he give a sort of parallel summary of it to the Colossians? Even in the other Epistles he summed the doctrine up in the phrase "In Christ." It was not a sentimental expression, not a pious platitude, indeed not in any way a metaphor: it was, and is, a marvellous Reality. To this day, if we mean what we say, we are affirming the Mystery every time we say "Yours faithfully in Christ." In the Ephesians he harps on this idea to such an extent (14 times in the first chapter alone) that if it were only a metaphor it would be offensive sentimentality; but since it is a Divine Reality, it becomes a Litany of appropriate praise. And this was because it was the way in which the Christian Idea was first revealed to him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me*?"

Inference. The laws of this Organism or Body, and the visible results of these laws, will have to be considered later on. Now we are only thinking of the mode of revelation. We may sum it up by saying that, whatever reasons people have for believing the two Mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation from Holy Scripture, they have ten times those reasons for believing that the one Vine, Temple, Kingdom, Body, Spouse of Christ is not a variegated bit of poetry, but one single Divine Mystery.

A Link with the Fourth Mystery. St. Paul even combines the Third and Fourth Mysteries together in an almost startling manner. "The bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the

body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, for all of us partake of the one bread." No one could have written that sentence who was not a believer in both the Mysteries as Divine.

XVI

THE FOURTH MYSTERY—THE EUCHARIST

The Tree of Life. In the great panorama of revelation, every detail of which was symbolic and prophetic, one more fundamental Mystery and only one, was foreshadowed. At the beginning, as we have seen, the story of Eden told of the Trinity, the Redemption through the Son of the Woman, and the victorious Kingdom. There was also the Tree of Life. This doubtless stood for the Tree of the Cross,—*ut qui in ligno vincebat in ligno quoque vinceretur*, that he who had overcome by the tree of death might himself be overcome by the tree of life. But what of the fruit of it? Adam was turned out of Paradise "lest he should take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever": and Angels stood on guard with a flaming sword turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life. For those therefore who should thereafter by the Redemption recover their right to Paradise there was to be a food of immortality. What was it?

Melchisedech. At the next great stage, when Abraham was chosen to hand the torch of revelation to posterity, there met him one day "Melchisedech, king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God." Some people try to minimize the significance of this incident by putting *and* instead of *for*. But why try to minimize what Holy Scripture strains every nerve to magnify? Abraham went out of his way to pay tithes, and to get a blessing from this unique forerunner of the Messias,—the one man who was allowed to receive the threefold anointing of Prophet, Priest and King. David, in that psalm which Our Lord Himself claimed as Messianic, pointed to the mystery by saying, "Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech." St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews comments fully on every phrase in the story of Genesis except one, and then says he has many more things to say but the mystery is too deep for treatment then. What was the one thing which he had omitted, and which contained this depth of mystery? Nothing else than the sacrifice of bread and wine.

The Journey to the Promised Land. When the Israelites left the land of bondage, in that journey which St. Paul tells us was prophetic in all its details, they began with the Banquet-Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, of which the blood on their doorposts saved them from the Angel of Death, and the partaking of which was their viaticum. The whole meaning of this shone through the word of the

Forerunner when he pointed to the Messias as the Lamb of God.

After the Baptism in the Red Sea, they were fed with Manna, that miraculous food from Heaven whose meaning our Lord Himself emphasized when He promised the Eucharist at Capharnaum.

Besides this spiritual food, they had also the spiritual drink, as St. Paul says, " from the Rock that followed them ; and the Rock was Christ."

When the tabernacle was constructed " according to the pattern seen in the mount," besides the altars for the sacrifices of blood and for incense, there was a table for the loaves of proposition (shew-bread).

From the time when the tabernacle was first set up, a cloud covered the sanctuary " and the glory of the Lord filled it,"—a visible Presence that guided them through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

David. In Psalm 22 the Prophet-King, singing the mercies of God, says " Thou hast prepared a *table* before me against them that afflict me ; Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my *chalice* which inebriateth me, how goodly is it ! "

Elias. When in despair Elias fled into the wilderness, an Angel brought him bread and water, and " he arose and ate and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, unto the mount of God."

Malachi. This, the last of the Old Testament prophets, is one of the most Messianic. In-

cidentally he tells us that the shew-bread was looked upon as a sacrifice. He says to the priests, " You offer up polluted bread upon my altar, and you say : Wherein have we polluted thee ? In that you say : The table of the Lord is contemptible." He continues, " From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation : for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts. And you have profaned it in that you say : The table of the Lord is defiled." Some people think that in this passage Malachi was speaking of his own day and with large broad-mindedness was exalting the actual Pagan worship over that of Israel. If he had meant that, he would not be speaking the truth, for he would be praising idolatrous forms of worship and not (as he might well do) approving of the virtues of individuals. It may be noted that the world-wide and perpetual sacrifice of which he prophesies is the bloodless sacrifice of bread ; for he contrasts table with table and " polluted bread " with the " clean oblation."

The New Testament. That the Blessed Eucharist is a Divine Mystery and not a Metaphor is shown by every mention of it in Gospels or Epistles. The solemnity with which our Lord announced it in the 6th chapter of St. John, after preparing the way for the announcement by the two miracles of the feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water,—the intensity of His desire to eat *this* pasch with His disciples,—the way in which He

provided for the preparation of it,—the words of institution,—the effect of the "breaking of bread" at Emaus,—the grave warning of St. Paul about "not discerning the Body of the Lord," all this, and a great deal more, explain why in Christendom the Mystery was never doubted for a thousand years. The Docetae were a sect that denied the reality of the Incarnation: if a metaphorical explanation of the Eucharist had been even thought possible, it would have suited them exactly: instead of that, they showed the universality of Christian belief by stopping away from the Eucharist as claiming to be the *Real* Presence.

Third and Fourth Mysteries together.

As we have seen before, St. Paul carries us one step further in 1 Cor. x, 16, 17: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, for we all partake of the one bread." Here we have the three Incarnation Mysteries combined,—the Real Presence of Christ being the uniting link of all His members. Hence St. Thomas Aquinas, in one of his illuminating side-remarks, tells us that the *res sacramenti*, the reality and the full fruit of the Eucharist, is the mystical body of Christ.

Might we not have expected it?

All God's Mysteries are so far beyond our ken that we cannot know them without revelation; but once they are revealed, they are so in harmony with

Nature as well as Grace that we almost feel as if we ought to have guessed them. We cannot argue from ourselves to God and thence claim to prove the Trinity ; but once the Trinity is revealed, we understand the reason of our threefold nature and learn to try to perfect His image within ourselves. So now that we know the truth of the perpetual Sacramental Presence, we see that we might almost have divined it. For the great contest between Grace and Sin is waged on earth and not in heaven, and it is always Incarnational, not merely spiritual. We see therefore why our great Captain is not content to watch the campaign from afar, helping by spiritual influences alone, He remains in our midst and gathers us around His tabernacles that we may find in Him that Incarnational help, in body and soul together, without which we could never persevere unto victory.

XVII

THE DIVINE ORGANISM

Parallel and Parable. As we saw at the beginning, the whole downward trend of the material universe towards corruption and chaos is a parallel and a parable of the course of evil, involving all intellectual beings, angels or men, who identify themselves with it, in its terrible tragedy ; while the upward striving towards all the forms of life, the struggle towards " the liberty of the sons of God," is a parallel and a parable of the Incarnation or the Kingdom of God. It is not a question of some optional form of religion which we choose for ourselves or adapt to our own notions : it is the whole scheme of Creation from end to end.

Science and Faith. Every advance in Science, especially Biology, throws light on the external form (the " words," so to speak) of this symbolic and prophetic parable. That, to me, is the fascination of Science. Every forward movement of plant or animal life seems to me to be a drawing nearer of the footsteps of the Incarnation. One Sunday

afternoon I was out with a small party of botanists, and one of them said to me, " You know, I am surprised at you a clergyman botanizing on Sunday." I replied, " Dr. ——, if Botany were not a sacred subject to me, I would not touch it on other days either." He said nothing, but I could see he was thinking deeply in his silence.

Evolution Produced to Infinity.

Since the whole purpose of this Creation is to evolve by supernatural means the Mystical Body of the Redeemer, a Divine Organism, it is quite in God's way of teaching that His natural organisms should foreshadow His Plan. Now every complex living organism consists of countless single cells, united through their individual walls by minute threads of the common " protoplasm " or life-substance, each having a partly independent life of its own, but each finding its full significance only in its contribution to the life of the whole. The higher the organism, the more complex the protoplasm and the more varied the individualities of the cells. In every case, throughout the plant and animal worlds, the organism begins with a single cell, usually a combination of two original cells which unite the nuclei of their protoplasm and thus start the story afresh. Every cell after that is added by division, each division carrying with it part of the original cell and remaining united with it. That is the plan of the whole system of visible organisms.

The Plan.

The first sketch, we may call it, of the supernatural organism lay in the union

of Adam and Eve (" they two shall become one flesh ") ; but that basis failed. Therefore God, whose word never returns to Him void and whose reconstructions are always on a higher plane, lifted the relation of Husband and Wife into the spiritual sphere, and chose for the new visible beginning the relation of Mother and Child, the Child by a deep mystery coming first. The Mother was absorbed into the Child, and from Him, through her, every individual human cell in the organism derives its supernatural life without losing its own natural existence.

The Unique Motherhood.

The analogy of the Highest Organism with all the lower ones, which seem to point a prophetic finger towards it, will become more evident if we say that the Old Testament was the Preparation of the Womb, Mary was the Mother-cell, the Incarnation was the Conception, the sacrificial Life and Death was the Gestation, and Pentecost was the Birth, of the Visible Church. Of course, broadly speaking, the *Ecclesia Dei* began with the announced Plan of Redemption and was nourished by the Blood of the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world. But a clear mental line exists between the Church of Promise and Hope and the Church of Fulfilment and Faith. There was a sense in which, according to our Lord's own words, even John the Baptist was not " in the Kingdom of Heaven." And indeed ordinary converts, even if they belonged to the Church of the Old Law, had to pass through a process in order to belong to the New. In this sense it is quite an intelligible statement that the Visible Kingdom (or,

shortly, the Church) was made up of those who by explicit faith and acceptance were united to the actually existing Redeemer, in contradistinction to the assemblage of those who by implicit faith were united in hope to the Redeemer to come.

In this sense the beginning of the actual visible Church on earth was in Mary ; and it is this beginning that gives Mary her unique position, and this position accounts for all her prerogatives and glories. When the Word of God was incarnate within her, and before the Mystery was known to others, she was (in the sense explained above) the only member and therefore the whole visible Church of God on earth. Therefore she had all its qualities. Therefore it was imperatively necessary that she should be without spot or stain. She was herself the Immaculate Conception of the Mystical Body : therefore it was only befitting that she herself should have been immaculately conceived. An Angel might point to her and say " There goes the Church of God," and, but for the Immaculate Conception, Satan might sneeringly retort, " That Church of yours was once in my possession." Perhaps this is why, in her apparition at Lourdes, when little Bernadette asked her name, she replied, " I am the Immaculate Conception."

The Test of Value. It is this consideration that gives the true value of life. Our own human individuality is so obvious to our natural experience, and the infinitely higher Divine life, to which it is our one end to minister, is so much a matter

of faith, not of sight, that we are for ever being tempted to magnify the former and forget the latter. Hence all the doubts, the murmurs, the talk of personal liberty, the assertions of self, the rebellions, the schisms and the heresies, which have made the world such a difficult and dangerous place for us. But "this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith."

The only Salvation.

It will now be understood what is meant by the saying handed down through all the centuries, "Nulla salus extra Ecclesiam," "no salvation outside of the Church." It is exactly the same as the words of St. Peter, "There is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved." If the Body is as it were in one personality with the Head, to be apart from the Body is to be apart from the Head. How it comes about that many who at first sight seem to be completely cut off can nevertheless on further consideration be shown to have the possibility of real union, will be better treated later on. Meanwhile, I do not think we can accept the formula, well-meant and kindly, but hardly theological, "of the soul, but not of the body of the Church." Body and soul cannot be thus separated in a true organism. The Church being an Incarnational Organism, has all its relations Incarnational,—that is to say, however spiritual and Divine these relations may be, they also and always have a visible side. If anybody is saved, it can only be by belonging both body and soul to the One Visible Kingdom.

The Single Cell versus the Organism.

The contrast between the life of any individual cell and that of the whole organism is naturally most pronounced where the organism is highest, that is to say, when the individual cell is a human person and when the universal life is Divine. But it can be shown quite effectively on the lower grades. There are cells in both plants and animals which can even separate themselves from the parent organism and carry the whole of their evolutionary history to another organism and thus form a fresh life. These cells bear with them the natural mysteries of heredity,—mysteries which are not only not nearing solution, but which grow deeper and wider with every accession of knowledge. Much might be said of these, as St. Paul wrote of Melchisedech ; but a more manageable analogy is found in the corpuscles of the blood. If we prick a finger and spread a drop of living blood on a slide and put it under a microscope, with the temperature at 98 degrees preserved, we see amid the serum a large number of red corpuscles and an occasional white one. The white ones look like tiny amoebas, and seem to be just unclothed bits of protoplasm. Watching them, we see that these amoeboids go on showing life, moving to and fro as if they had a will of their own. If now we could conceive these corpuscles as being endowed with intelligence and speech, one of them might vauntingly exclaim through the microscope, " You see, I have a life of my own : I have gained by leaving you : I am not hustled so much, and in this haven of peace I can work out my own destiny." Whereupon, as if arguing with a microbe, we might reply, " You little

fool, you are only carrying for a few minutes the life I gave you : your whole value was in your share of me : as long as I keep up the temperature, you can argue with me, but you have no destiny now to work out." The temperature then goes down and our poor amoeboid corpuscle shrinks into death. The comparison may not be very flattering to our pride, but we need to be very important persons indeed in the Church of God to be anything more than white corpuscles in its blood. Lamennais and Lacordaire were young friends together, and of the two the former was perhaps the greater genius ; but Lamennais asserted his separate independence and his influence is now dead and almost forgotten : Lacordaire submitted his powers to the universal life, and his influence lives on.

Metaphor and Reality again.

If a thing is a real organism, all its parts are united by what may be called the continuous connective life-substance. If this bond be severed, the part cut off may persist, but only as a new organism. Such organisms may gather together in groups and have a sort of common life and action, as for example nations or societies among men, swarms of bees or packs of wolves among animals. It is only by analogy that the predicates of organic life and unity can be given to such associations : we sometimes even personify them, and a great many fallacies arise in social questions from pushing such analogies too far. Religion forms an obvious basis for such metaphorical unions. Buddhism, Mahometanism, Judaism strongly claim such quasi-organic unity ; but they never dream (except in

some distant Nirvana) of a real organism in which their own individuality is of value only in so far as it is absorbed into the common life. There are forms of Christianity of which the same must be said : indeed, with some of them it is their distinctive doctrine to deny any form of individual subordination to a communal entity. This, in truth, is the root distinction between the Protestant and the Catholic view of life. The Protestant, proudly asserting his independence, takes all the varied and emphatic assertion in Scripture of the unity of the Church,—the Vine, the Body, the Bride, the Living Temple,—to refer to a purely spiritual ideal, vaguely influencing life on earth, but realised only in a higher sphere now and in heaven hereafter. Catholics believe that the Bible means just what it says, and think that in this too, or in this especially, the Will of our Father is done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Uniting Substance.

But then the Catholic must show what is the visible bond of union, what is the connective life-substance, what is the Divine power and influence which takes the individual man and transforms him into itself in such a way that the mere human life is naught and the Organic life all in all. We Catholics have no doubt or vagueness about it. It has been already seen that our greatest theologian, speaking of the Eucharist, throws off as a root-principle which he supposes everybody to know, that the *res sacramenti* (the full fruit of this sacrament) is the Mystical Body of Christ. It is not we that make the Body : it is His own self really abiding with us under visible forms that takes us and

transforms us and unites us and adapts us to His purposes, so that mortifying our members which are on earth we become blood of His blood and flesh of His flesh, our conversation is with Christ in heavenly places and we become partakers of the Divine Nature. And in very truth, if two people are receiving Communion side by side, or for that matter a thousand miles apart, who shall say that there is no visible link between them? The link is not physical. Both the link and the Organism are Incarnational, and are therefore both spiritual and material, and far more real than anything merely physical can be. And this uniting link extends throughout all earthly time and space, and at least potentially includes all humanity.

The Whole Sacramental System.

We go further. We see some of the visible side of the Mystery, but by no means all. It has already been pointed out that much of the common destiny of spirit and matter is beyond our ken. We cannot in the least understand how material things can form part of the essential punishment of the fallen angels. Equally mysterious to us is the material or Incarnational link which makes the angels of Heaven common members with ourselves of the Body of Christ. But we know it is so. It is therefore only to be expected that we shall not be able to explain fully the transforming and uniting power of the whole sacramental system of which the Blessed Eucharist is the crown.

What the Early Church used to say.

When one considers the teaching given to the newly baptized by the great Bishops of the early Church, a teaching crystallized in the liturgical forms of Baptism and sacramental blessings, one wonders whether we are not somewhat over-apt to " modernize " our conceptions. Although the Fathers knew well that there was no substantial change except in the Eucharist, yet they used language about the Divine Power smiting itself into the water or the oil for Baptism or Confirmation which we seem to be afraid to use now. After the invocation it is no longer *mere* water or *mere* oil, they say. About Communion, St. Ambrose (if the discourse is his) uses one of those *obiter dicta* which show more than any elaborate argument how deeply the Mystery point of view dominated their thoughts. " In this sacrament there is Christ, because it is the Body of Christ : therefore it is not bodily food but spiritual . . . for the body of God is a spiritual body," alluding to the words of St. Paul that after the resurrection the body becomes a *corpus spiritale.* Evidently for St. Ambrose the word *spiritual* did not imply anything of unreality or of the metaphorical : rather for him it meant ultra-reality. So St. Cyril of Jerusalem, with regard to the anointing at Baptism, claims an Incarnational reality and therefore a mysterious unifying power, when he teaches his neophytes as follows : " See that you do not look upon this as a bare and common anointing. For as the bread of the Eucharist after the invocation of the Holy Spirit is not ordinary bread but the Body of Christ ; so also this holy anointing is after the invocation no

longer a bare or (as one may say) ordinary anointing, but the gift-treasury of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, the presence of His Divinity, producing true reality. And this is meant by placing the oil on your forehead and other parts of your body. For while the body is visibly anointed with material oil, the soul is sanctified by the holy and vivifying Spirit." While the work of the Head of the Church is done by Himself as Incarnate (chiefly in the Eucharist), the work of the Holy Spirit, who acts as the Soul of the Church but is not Himself Incarnate, is nevertheless done by Him in Incarnational ways, Himself appearing under forms of dove or tongues of fire, as if He were yearning to become flesh that we who are flesh may become spiritual.

The Resulting Visible Unity. If the modes whereby the Organism is compacted into unity, though abundantly revealed to our faith, are somewhat veiled in mystery to our knowledge, there are no such reservations in the facts and results of that unity. The consequences of it are written broadcast over the story of the world. This Organism has in the highest degree all the unities of all the organisms below. The True Vine will have, and visibly has, all the growth of the physical vine, and its development is always true to type and always sure of itself. The Living Temple, " built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone ; in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord : in whom you also are built together into

an habitation of God in the Spirit," stands supreme over human history as the Cathedral of Durham dominates its hill, or that of Ely the country of the fens, or that of Lincoln the town that nestles around it. To all the world is visible that Mystical Body which " being compacted and fitly joined together by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity." The Bride of Christ, with her Divine Head and her Divine Soul, makes herself felt to all her members as the Universal Mother, ever young, ever fruitful, ever more and more beautiful as our love and enthusiasm go out towards her. As the Kingdom of God, she has visibly all the unity of government, of purpose, of discipline. Hers is a Mind which reads all the problems of the universe, a Memory which bridges over all the centuries, a Voice which with no uncertain sound fearlessly utters all she knows, an Instinct which emboldens her teachers to claim that the *sensus communis fidelium* is a sure principle of theological science, an Authority which justifies her in saying to every generation, " It hath seemed good to me and to the Holy Ghost," a Taste which compels an outsider like Matthew Arnold to call her " the Master Artist of all the ages," and a Personality which makes all heresies uneasy in her presence and all her own children enthusiastically confident of her immortality here and her complete victory hereafter. Beyond all question, God Almighty has in His Divine Church justified our faith, fulfilled our hope and satisfied our love even here upon earth. " Nothing is wanting to you in any grace whil

you wait for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Infallible Voice.

The science of Nature and the science of Grace have much in common as to method, but there is a vital distinction between them. They both have to deal with errors, possibilities, probabilities, ascertained facts, hypotheses, theories and laws. With both of them ascertained facts and demonstrated laws are fixed points : all the rest is speculation. So far from hampering freedom in this speculation, every certified fact and every established law opens widely on to new lines of thought. To deny a fact or to go counter to a fixed law is error ; and error is bondage, not freedom. The difference between the sciences lies in the way in which facts and laws are determined. Physical science is concerned with things within our ken, and the only " authority " recognised is competence in direct observation or consensus among skilled judges ; and even these may be boldly questioned. The science of Grace, however, deals with matters beyond our ken, or mysteries, which cannot be discovered by us, but are given in Divine Revelation. The things so revealed constitute for us the ascertained facts and irrefragable laws of our science. And again, so far from limiting our freedom of thought, they open wide to us ever enlarging views of human life and of the course of the universe. Every speculation which directly or in the long run contradicts a fact or law of Revelation is thereby recognised as an error, and we are glad to be rid of it, and are the more free to speculate in other directions. Obviously,

since only the finite side of things is within our competence, we require guidance from the side of the Infinite. Otherwise the Revelation would be frustrated. Nor would written documents suffice, though of course their importance is immense. It would still be a question what they mean, and they cannot react to our speculations. Books, said Socrates, can't teach, because books can't answer questions. We discussed at the beginning where we get our Mysteries from, i.e., from the Word Incarnate. But since this Word has produced itself into a perpetual Divine Personality, identified with Himself and animated by His Spirit, it is obvious that we possess an ever-present regulating and controlling Organ of Revelation. Instead of checking our liberty, this Authority immensely increases it by warning us off the bondage of error. How then do we recognise the Voice of this Authority? By the simple process of finding out whether it is the whole Personality speaking,—for example, when we have a unanimous consent of the Fathers, or of theologians, or a universal belief among the faithful in matters of Grace. Again, a General Council of the Church evidently speaks for the whole Body. That at the beginning each of the twelve Apostles was entitled to this completely representative voice, follows from their universal mission. Each of them was infallible. There is one other person who has this representative capacity, and that is the Bishop of Rome, who carries through the centuries the succession of St. Peter, who of all the Twelve was chosen to be the Centre of Unity. The mere fact that we are bound to be one with him in Faith assures us that God

would not allow his teaching to fail in the Faith, or we might all be led into error. This is the meaning of Papal Infallibility, which has often been so much misunderstood. It simply means that one who is endowed with the privilege and the duty of speaking on behalf of the whole Church will necessarily have either the positive grace or the negative restraint to make his representative utterances worthy of his office. The giving of a Revelation which imposed the obligation of universal obedience implied that it should be safeguarded to the uttermost for all time.

XVIII

ADDENDA

The Measure of Reality is Faith.

Perhaps a few words should be added to preclude misunderstanding. This is the more needful because on the Catholic side there have been some ill-advised attempts to express the effects of Holy Communion in physical terms. It will therefore not be amiss to remind ourselves once more of the three kinds of reality: (1) Sense realities, (2) Incarnational realities, and (3) the Divine Reality. The first are merely transient. The second are eternal and on a higher plane, and therefore their reality is far more intense. They are a kind of bridge, a Jacob's ladder, between the first and third. In them, the visible or physical forms are only a stepping stone for faith. St. Thomas has expressed this relation in the great hymn *Adoro Te*, where Theology and Poetry move like sisters hand in hand.

> Visus, tactus, gustus in te fallitur,
> Sed auditu solo tuto creditur.

One Protestant controversialist thought he had his

enemy on the hip when he said " St. Thomas failed to observe that if three of the senses are deceived, so also might the fourth." This sapient critic was apparently under the impression that *auditu solo* is in the dative case. The whole verse, which expresses exactly what we want now, may be thus rendered :—

> No sense can reach this truth in depths of love enshrined :
> Hearing alone brings faith that vivifies the mind.*
> Whate'er the Son of God hath said, by faith I hold :
> No word can bar the truth the Word of Truth hath told.

Is the Bond of Union Continuous ?

Now it might be urged that, if the analogy of natural organisms is to hold good, the connecting action of the life-substance should be continuous, whereas Holy Communion is only an occasional act, and indeed Baptism is only a single act. To this it may be replied that in such matters we judge not by what we see, but by what is revealed. Our Divine Lord implies some kind of continuity of union, not only for the soul but also for the body, when He says that the resurrection is the fruit of the communion. And the Fathers of the Church, as Franzelin says, " speak of a true conjoining and as it were of a special affinity of Christ with us by means of the intimate uniting of His body with our bodies, and this is by them considered not only for the time of His actual substantial presence within us under the sacramental forms, but also as a certain permanent effect in our bodies, so that we become sharers in His body and blood (*con-*

* " Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

corporei et consanguinei)." The beginning of the *nexus* is visible to us: the continuation of it rises up into faith, and the higher we go the more real it is.

Faith has its Confirmations.

But this higher reality is not altogether out of visible reach. It flashes back from time to time, as if to confirm any weakness there may be in our faith. Not only have there been among the Saints miraculous manifestations linking bodily purity directly with Holy Communion, but even on lower levels the Church's age-long and world-wide experience points the same way. Mainly through the Sacrament of Penance she has learned to pool her moral experience, and she declares that, besides the preparation for the resurrection which our Lord promised, Holy Communion produces (in those who do not impede its action) the direct bodily result of cooling the passions and diminishing interior temptation. Could it be otherwise? *Virtus de illo exibat.* There was, and is, salvation in touching even the hem of His garment. He could have sanctified John the Baptist from afar off, but He chose to do so by direct presence and by the sacramental effect of His Mother's voice. No one can measure the invisible transforming and uniting power of the whole sacramental network which reaches far beyond the actual limits of visible Baptism and visible Communion. And this is enough to assure us of that permanence and continuity which all lower organisms symbolize.

All Salvation included in the Incarnational Scheme.

It is this principle that enables us in our thoughts to soften the apparent harshness of the doctrine, " No salvation outside of the Church." Even into the heathen world the possibility extends of the baptism of desire, at least as far as the possibility of divine faith. And among Christians separated from us, valid baptism is very general. Most of the children therefore are (though they do not know it and their parents will not admit it) Catholics ; for there is only one Baptism and only one Church. And Catholics they remain until they *sinfully* cut themselves off from the Faith. They may thus, and many do, remain organically connected with the Visible Church though neither they nor those around them recognise the union.

The Communion of Saints.

We see now why the Apostles' Creed puts together " The Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints." Just as in the 6th chapter of St. John, our Lord gathers the whole economy of Grace around its central and supreme act, the partaking of His Flesh and Blood ; so in the Creed the word *Communion* expresses the whole life of the Church with an emphasizing allusion to the sacramental source of it all. We see too why Communion under either kind is sufficient to secure to us the full effect of the Sacramental Presence. In the West, the laity now, indeed all who are not actually offering up the Sacrifice, are satisfied with their communion under the appearance of bread : in early days, when babies were given the three Sacraments of Life

together, a drop from the chalice sufficed. And surely there is at least a symbolic reference to Communion in the words, "We knew Him in the breaking of bread."

The Foolishness of the Taunt of "Magic."

The whole doctrine of the Incarnational effect of sacraments and sacramentals has often been made a subject of mockery. Our opponents talk sneeringly of magic, and the very word hocuspocus is a corruption of the words of consecration. We need not be surprised. "Wonder not if the world hate you." Christ Himself was hated by Pharisees, mocked by Herod and condemned by Pilate, and in His Mystical Body He has been facing Pharisees, Herods and Pilates ever since. Magic! Why, the whole course of magic, whether false or real, whether human or diabolical, is merely a clumsy parody which falls infinitely below the marvels that pervade the life of the Divine Organism. God has revealed that it is His will to teach humility by using the feeble things of this world to work high spiritual results. It is the pride of creatures to refuse to recognise that Will.

XIX

THE TEACHING OF THE THIRD MYSTERY

Early Days. The Early Church had a great advantage in teaching the Faith from the fact that crowds of adults annually became catechumens, who were treated not individually, but as a body, undergoing common instruction, being excluded from the solemn part of the Mass along with the public penitents, receiving baptism all together at Easter (or Pentecost), wearing their white robes for the week until with their first Communion they entered into the full visible life of the Mystical Body. Easter week was (as we still see by traces in the Liturgy) the Octave of the Mysteries. The Bishop's course of sermons for that week was called *De Mysteriis*. The Trinity and the Incarnation were taken for granted, and the topics always were Baptism and Confirmation (which were often administered together) as the birth into the Life of Christ, and the Eucharist as the very Life itself. According to St. Augustine's already quoted remark, in our Lord's days His disciples saw the Head and believed in the Body ; we now see the

Body and learn to believe in the Head. The yearly addition of the white-robed neophytes, with all the solemnity of the ceremonies of the new birth, impressed the imagination strongly and greatly assisted the preaching and the knowledge of the Faith.

Modern Methods. We lose something of this vividness now because baptism is generally given individually to infants, and even adult converts are received privately. Easter to us now is the Feast of Christ's Resurrection, and the growth of the Body preparing for the final Resurrection is perhaps not sufficiently emphasized. We no longer have the Octave of Mysteries. And yet it is precisely the Third Mystery which is most denied. It has always been the way with the Church to assert with most solemnity, by ritual as well as by argument and by preaching, that Truth which her enemies put in the forefront of the battle. The denial of the Eucharist Mystery in the Middle Ages gave us the Feast of Corpus Christi and the new universal rite of Benediction. I wonder whether it would not be a high and holy thing to have a Feast of the Corpus Mysticum. In November we celebrate the Church in Heaven on the first day, and the Church of Purgatory on the second. The Church on earth is equally Divine. I could wish that the grand procession of Mysteries that fill half the year,—the Birth of Jesus, His Passion, His Resurrection and Ascension, the Coming of the Holy Ghost, the Revelation of the Trinity, Corpus Christi, the manifestation of the Sacred Heart,—that this glorious series might have one more to point to the meaning of it all, and

that when the octave of the Sacred Heart is over we might have from Sunday to Sunday a time of celebration of the graces and glories of the Church of God, expressly under the name of Corpus Mysticum.

A Certain Lack of Appreciation.

My experience seems to indicate that the Mystery is often not apprehended as it should be. When I first spoke of writing on the *Four* Mysteries, I was asked by many good Catholics (who of course believe all the four implicitly), " What is your fourth ? " They would not have asked that of St. Paul who called this *the* Mystery, nor of St. Augustine, Doctor of Grace, whose voluminous works are full of it. If it were more prominently expounded, it would immensely help the understanding and solution of difficulties now buried in theological discussions, and of practical matters of discipline of daily occurrence. The doctrine of the Atonement, for instance, becomes perfectly simple. Christ in His Mystical Body, as St. Athanasius once said, " took upon Himself the common Person of Humanity." If He averted the wrath of God from us by merely *substituting* Himself for us, there would be indeed infinite mercy, but where would be the justice ? But if I am a member of His, then I suffer with him and He with me, His life is my life, His merits my merits, His thoughts my thoughts, and the Father pardons me and sanctifies me and glorifies me because by infinite mercy I have in His Son satisfied His equally infinite Justice. All this, of course, *secundum mensuram donationis Christi*, according to the measure of the giving of Christ.

As a Help to Discipline. Again, if the Mystery were more explicitly held, there would be less trouble about the ever recurring problem of marriage. In the light of this Mystery, marriage is far more a question for the whole Body of Christ than for the two individuals who are intending it. They make their own arrangements, and when authorities step in with prohibitions or conditions, they ask with affected honest indignation, "As long as I myself remain a good Catholic, why should the Church interfere with my private concerns?" The thoughtless young people, through want of appreciation of this Mystery, fail to see that it is not the Bride of Christ interfering with their life, it is they who (unless they marry "in the Lord") are interfering with hers, which is an infinitely more important matter. Or a young man, with the cocksureness of youth, determines that a certain branch of a Secret Society is a harmless or even beneficent thing. When the Church, with her world-wide and age-long experience over and above her Divine instincts, tells him that Secret Societies are incompatible with and even hostile to her own existence, that they are virtually an antagonistic religion and that they are establishing an exclusive bond of brotherhood inconsistent with the universal brotherhood of Christ, he rises in rebellion, and finds at length after sad experience that he has bartered his spiritual inheritance for a mess of pottage.

An Historic Instance. I feel drawn to adduce a notable case in which (as it seems to me) this Mystery was very unfortunately

ignored. It is with great reluctance that I refer to the episode of the late Dr. Mivart's clash with the Church's authority. I have so great an intellectual debt of gratitude to him that I shall treat the case with all sympathy, and no one shall think any worse of Dr. Mivart for anything I say. Dr. Mivart, not professing to be a theologian, unfortunately stepped into the theological arena under the guidance of a priest of modernistic tendencies. He wrote some articles speculating on how far a man may be a modernist in his attitude towards the Incarnation. He did not put forward these views as his own, but as possibilities for others. Nevertheless, he shocked the instincts of the faithful. His Bishop demanded that he should sign a list of very explicit statements regarding the Incarnation. Dr. Mivart was old and ill, and was deeply hurt, and we know the result. He was punished more for the errors of others than for his own. But there was one point on which his own faith was uninformed. I do not say that he consciously denied : he simply was not aware. He was a convert, and had never been fully instructed on the Third Mystery. That was his own mistake, and it seems to me that discipline should have been exerted in that direction. But it was not. As far as I know, not a word was said about it. At the time, I studied the matter carefully and published an article on it, which I sent to Dr. Mivart himself. If it reached him, it was on his deathbed. It seems to me so important that in an appendix to this chapter I shall insert that article as it was written. I insert it as a whole because it also contains what I hope is a useful summary of the Church's attitude towards Physical

Science. It still seems to me a strange thing that a point of faith should have been openly contradicted without any comment following. Dr. Mivart's son has recently given an interesting account of his father's conversion, and this quite confirms my surmise,—he was received into the Church without the Mystery of the Divine Organism having been even stated to him. And it is a Mystery which all his scientific knowledge would have enabled him to see with a peculiar sense of its beauty and to expound with a great deal of force. The pity of it !

APPENDIX

(*From the South African Catholic Magazine, February*, 1900)

DR. MIVART'S ARTICLES

Throughout the English-speaking world there has been a heartfelt sigh over the present entanglement of Dr. Mivart's lifelong work. It is as if a portion of our army, after a long endurance of the hottest fire in the fore-front, should by over-impetuous disobedience to orders find itself not only cut off from the main body, but also in such a position as to be firing by mistake on its own comrades. We do not mean to minimize, nor do we care to dwell upon, the moral errors which must be accountable for such an *impasse*. Leaving such blame without blaming it ourselves, to those who

naturally feel more for the many whom Dr. Mivart's defection may injure, we would still write as those who hope that the terrible error in the campaign may yet be retrieved, and who are persuaded that to this end sympathy is more powerful than denunciation.

Certain it is that the chief intellectual struggle against the world now-a-days is on the side of the encroachments of Science. To make an effective reply to the attacks from this direction, it is necessary to have men who are competent in Science as well as Faith. I do not mean that it is necessary to know as much science as Helmholtz in order to detect the philosophical errors of Helmholtz. But in order to secure a hearing among outsiders we must have men who, altogether apart from their faith, are admitted as compeers in knowledge with the Huxleys and the Spencers of the day. Such a man has Dr. Mivart been. And to this extent he has been universally acknowledged as an effective Catholic champion. To this extent, the anti-faith part of the scientific world will rejoice over his having come into collision with the authorities of the Church ; and to this extent, besides our anxiety for the dominion of grace in every individual soul, we are anxious to see the discord resolved into harmony.

This double issue compels a double analysis. Face to face with our opponents, we are bound to analyse the significance and import of Dr. Mivart's difference with the Church's teaching authority. Face to face with Dr. Mivart himself, we feel impelled with all sympathy to trace the causes of the divergence, and

incidentally (with a view to those who are likely to be attracted into his orbit) to mark the very spot where he began to veer off from the line of faith.

First of all we must make it clear that the present difficulty is not one of Science. Dr. Mivart's work in both Science and Philosophy still stands, and we are not going to unsay our gratitude. It is only since he began to teach us Theology, without first learning it himself, that the trouble has arisen. Physical Science can teach us nothing about the Scheme of Redemption, the gravity of sin, the nature of hell, and so forth : and it is these topics that are now in question.

It is the more important to emphasize this, because there is a widely felt impression that the Catholic Church somehow does not get on with Physical Science. From the days of Roger Bacon until now, they say, she is always trying to suppress her men of science. And even now Dr. Mivart would seem to desire to place his own difficulty on that footing. But it is not fair to say so. Albertus Magnus was as ardent a scientist as his contemporary Roger Bacon ; if the latter was silenced, why not the former ? Galileo taught what Copernicus taught : if Galileo was condemned, why was Copernicus honoured ? In each case the reason of the difference will be found, not in the science, but in the character and the temper of the men and their attitude towards Faith.

Is there then nothing in the impression ? Yes : there is this much. Physical Science devotes itself entirely to the phenomena of the visible world ; it is intensely fascinating and tends to become absorbing ; it cultivates one side of the intelligence at the expense

of the rest ; it almost compulsively leads to the fancy that the phenomena it studies, so regular, so interdependent, so unifiable, are in very truth the ultimate realities. It creates an unwillingness in the mind to see beyond the veil : it feels as if it could do without God, it finds the soul superfluous and free-will an intolerable exception ; it declares miracles unthinkable. All this is a necessary effect of listening too exclusively to the voice of Mother Earth.

" Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came."

Every priest who has to give much time to physical science knows what pains he has to take lest such studies should have a " drying " effect on his devotion, and therefore on his theology. To the full development of the soul, excessive concentration on any one line of study is as detrimental as disproportionate muscular exercise is to the development of the body ; and in the present splendidly progressive stage of physical science, the pursuit of it tends almost irresistibly to become excessive. Faith and the World are opposed if they are separately regarded, although the world was created to be a stepping-stone to faith : it is not therefore surprising that, under similar conditions, the science of the faith and the science of the world should exert conflicting attractions. Thus there is some truth in

saying that the Catholic Church looks upon Physical Science as a danger.

But dangers are meant to be overcome, and to be overcome they must be entered into. Catholic scientists, then, knowing themselves to be in a position of special intellectual danger, are bound to take those precautions of grace which are necessary and sufficient for their safety, and it is not surprising if often they are wounded and even fall. Such danger is not peculiar to science : it is inherent in every form of worldliness. The pursuit of wealth is much more dangerous. But we notice the dangers of science more on account of its intellectual dignity.

Summing up, therefore, we would say that the import of Dr. Mivart's difference (temporary, we hope) with the Church's authorities amounts to this,—that his devotion to science has very highly developed one side of his mind ; that by means of this high development he has done, and may yet do, immense service to the Church ; that, however, such development has naturally been at the expense of his theological powers ; that, being probably unconscious of this, he has taken up theological questions as if his mental strength were proportionate throughout ; hence, that he has naturally fallen into theological error.

To make good this statement, we must show precisely where this theological weakness reveals itself, and how, if he had used towards himself the same sort of reasoning he so effectively employed against Huxley, there would have been no need for variance at all. This leads us to our second analysis.

What was it that Dr. Mivart set out to prove ? He

had already been arguing against the claimed continuity of the Anglican Church, and brought forward as his proof a change of mental and moral attitude in the 16th century, far too structural and too sudden to be explained by any theory of organic development. He was met by the retort, " But the Roman Catholic Church has changed also." This retort may be faced in various ways. There is the dogmatic man who will say off-hand and with precision, " There has been no real change at all : our doctrines, once delivered, are delivered for good and all : and the whole question is one of doctrine." The man is right in his own way, of course : but there is the misfortune that he will be listened to by none but the extremists on his own side. Then there comes the moderate man, who will admit changes even wide and in appearance deep, but will plead that on examination they will not be found to be essential, and that they are only the natural change of any organism in correspondence with its environment. In urging his case, he is perhaps tempted to minimize the extent of the changes, knowing that any admission he makes will be microscopically enlarged, while his positive argument will be treated with the other end of the telescope. This, with due resistance of the temptation, we believe to be the proper line to follow. A man of Dr. Mivart's trend of mind, however, will be impatient of anything that looks like minimizing, and he will take up a third course. Not only will he grant the variations put forward by our opponents, he will even tell them of others regardless whether their extent will be magnified or not ; he will put all these variations in their strongest light, and arrange them inductively

so as to be focused into a formidable whole ; and will then say, " See how much we can afford to grant you, confident that even such changes as these, gradually produced as they have been by process of evolution, do not amount to solution of continuity."

Such an attitude has an air of chivalry about it, much like John Ridd's action in his final conflict with Carver Doone,—though his rib was broken, he allowed Carver the first grip on his hand that he might fight his enemy at a disadvantage and still kill him. Now such chivalry is all very well, but you must have John Ridd's strength to be able to afford it,—and even John Ridd would have failed if he had allowed Carver to grip his broken rib instead of his hand. In this case, to measure the precise amount of concession we may make to our opponents requires an exceedingly delicate theological judgment, the *poco piú* and the *poco meno* sometimes making the whole difference between life and death. And if other motives mingle with our chivalry, the matter becomes more complicated still. Here, for example, with the desire to forgo all advantage as against Anglicans, Dr. Mivart has combined a tentative experiment upon the limits of Catholic liberty of speculation. Besides giving his opponent every advantage he can think of, he has elected to fight him on the thinnest and most slippery ice he can find.

Let us look at Dr. Mivart's array of concessions. There has been change, he says, of more or less intensity, sometimes amounting to a doctrinal *volte face*, and of greater or less extent, sometimes embracing the whole Church, upon the following 18 points :—

(1) The astronomical constitution of the universe.
(2) "No salvation outside the Church."
(3) The prohibition of usury.
(4) Intolerance of false teaching.
(5) The attitude towards gambling.
(6) The sense of responsibility in confining our assertions within the limits of evidence.
(7) Inspiration of Scripture.
(8) Authoritative interpretation of Scripture.
(9) "Morbid notions about sin," and hell.
(10) The story of original sin.
(11) The plan of the Atonement.
(12) The estimate of Paganism.
(13) Modes of asceticism.
(14) The possibility of worshipping God under forms unfamiliar to Christendom.
(15) The Resurrection of our Lord.
(16) The miraculous Birth of our Lord.
(17) The expectation of the end of the world.
(18) Witchcraft and diabolical possession.

It is not our intention to criticize this list fully, for we are not concerned directly with Anglicans. We will but say that the list would be exceedingly formidable if all the items on it were, with more or less importance, of the same theological grade. Dr. Mivart, it is true, disclaims the theologian's attitude ; he is only testifying to common beliefs, he says. But the *sensus communis fidelium* is a *locus theologicus*, and requires as delicate handling as any other of the loci. The value of the writings of many of the Fathers consists mainly in the fact that they are *competent* witnesses

of the faith of the people in their part of the world. Had they been liable to mix up scientific opinion and the spirit of the age and individual eccentricities in one jumble with divine faith, they would not have been competent. The fact that Dr. Mivart had no misgivings about his own competence in the matter has a real bearing upon the unfortunate central mistake which has caused the whole trouble.

Of his 18 variations, the first is purely scientific, and if that is to be admitted the list might be indefinitely extended. The whole Christian community for example, has changed its belief about the constitution of the air : it used to be an element, now it is not even a single substance. But what do these things matter ? If I choose to become a crank and advocate the theory that the earth is flat and immovable, it will not make one jot of difference to my faith.

So again the questions of usury and gambling are minor points of moral theology,—of the second order of infinitesimals in our summation. The questions of tolerance of heresy or paganism imply judgment of individuals, not matters of principle,—they would belong to the third order of infinitesimals.*

On the other hand, the questions of the Birth and the Resurrection of our Lord are not infinitesimals at all. But the whole Catholic public has been staggered at the assertion that even in one individual there is variation on them. Either there is a terrible mistake

* This paragraph was loosely written, and referred rather to the mathematical analogy of a summation of series than to theological measurement. It is not for a moment supposed that any part of the faith can be infinitesimal.

on Dr. Mivart's side, or there is doubt of sanity on the other. It seems to me that Dr. Mivart put this extremest of all cases from a desire to give scientific completeness to his induction,—on the maxim that principles are best tested in abnormal instances. But the experiment has been unfortunate. It caused, for example, a friend of mine, an Agnostic and a man of considerable scientific attainment, to say to me, "That article of Dr. Mivart's seems to me an unfair one, written from inside your Church."

Thus sifting the list, without completely exhibiting our process, we may reduce our points of consideration to six, as being the only truly theological points on which discussion is material to the issue. These points are Salvation outside the Church, Scripture, its Interpretation, Sin and its punishments, Original sin, and the Atonement.

It is in handling these points that Dr. Mivart has especially shown his lack of theological science. There is one central truth, implicitly felt by every Catholic (Dr. Mivart included), and explicitly held by every theologian, which so completely dominates these six points that the whole discussion would have been superfluous, if it had been borne in mind. Yet, in words, Dr. Mivart I will not say denies it, but is naïvely unconscious of its very existence. He states the contradictory of it with a calm assumption that everybody is agreeing with him. This is what he says in the *Fortnightly Review* :—

> "But what *is* the Church? In truth, no such thing really has, or can have, any separate existence. All

> that exists is a number of men and women who possess certain attributes and stand in various real relations to their environment."

And again in the *Nineteenth Century* :—

> "As we pointed out in our former article, 'the Church,' *qua* church, is an ideal abstraction. What an utter nonentity then must be 'the soul' of this abstraction!"

These are in truth statements that would have delighted Huxley. It is as if, supposing the various organs of our body to be endowed with separate intelligence, one white corpuscle of the blood were to say to another in protoplasmic vibrations, "What after all *is* this Man? In truth, no such being really exists otherwise than as an aggregate of us. And if he is an ideal abstraction, what an utter nonentity must be 'the soul' of this abstraction!"

Let me put epigrammatically the truth that Dr. Mivart has missed. *The saying that the Church is the Body of Christ is not a Metaphor but a Mystery.* This will be found to lie at the root of the whole difference between Protestantism and Catholicism. And yet Dr. Mivart gives it away to our opponents as a trivial concession.

Not consciously, of course. It is quite possible for a non-theologian to get along without an explicit enunciation of this truth. For myself, I remember it came to me as a living reality in the middle of my theological course, when I had been studying *De Incarnatione* for several months It came to me from

St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, which may almost be called the hymn of this mystery, with its continually recurring phrase "In Christ," "In Him,"—no fewer than fifteen times in the first chapter. This was the essential mystery of that "wisdom" or philosophy which St. Paul claims for the Christian Church,—"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery" (1 Cor. ii. 7). He calls it elsewhere "the mystery of my gospel." St. John calls it "the mystery of God" (Apoc. x. 7). Indeed it almost seems as if this is what our Lord meant by the words, "To you it is given to know the Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven: to the rest in parables." That is, you know it as a Mystery, other people would call it a Metaphor.

Let me illustrate. Huxley speaks somewhere of the swirl of Niagara forming a permanent hillock of water; it looks always the same, but we know it consists only of ever moving particles of water obeying a certain law: the particles come and go, the form remains: but the form is nothing in itself, and to call it a hillock is merely a metaphor, the only reality being the separate particles. In man, he would say, the same thing holds, only in a much more complicated fashion: there is a continuous flow of particles of carbon and oxygen and hydrogen and nitrogen and so forth, under elaborate laws, forming an apparently permanent aggregate, which we find it convenient to call a man, just as we called the other thing a hillock; but there is nothing real, he would say, except the particles and their relations: and what we call the soul is only a metaphor. This is where we join issue, and none could answer better than Dr. Mivart himself. And the summary

of his answer would be a clear-drawn distinction between a Metaphor and a Spiritual Reality. Now when a Spiritual Reality is above human comprehension we call it a Mystery.

This Mystery then, or transcendent spiritual reality, signifies that all who are redeemed are co-ordinated " by the power that worketh within us " into a Divine Organism. They do not lose their individual life, any more than the white corpuscle sacrifices its own protoplasmic movements, but they become part of a wider and higher life,—" being made partakers of the Divine Nature." The soul of this Organism is by no means an ideal abstraction. It lives and acts and develops ; it assimilates and rejects ; it speaks and commands ; it teaches and condemns ; above all it loves, and saves. When Dr. Mivart discussed the *development* of this Organism, he was implicitly confessing the truth of this Mystery. When he called it an abstraction, he was unconsciously walking in an obscurity induced by disproportionate trust in physical science.

Of course, by making this slip in public, he has made it harder to recover his balance. It is a Mystery that is better seen by loving devotion than by wounded feelings. But it is always so : whenever we get into a false position, even by accident, we have to make heroic efforts to regain our level. But if Dr. Mivart would only put himself at the point of view of this Mystery, he would see how inadequate are his statements (for example) of the Catholic doctrine of the Atonement. He would know that Sin should be measured, not from the point of view of a white

corpuscle, but from that of the whole organism : and if he remembered that, he would not call the healthy old Catholic view " morbid."

We have not space to fill out the details, but we have kept our promise to point out precisely how and where the error has arisen. We do hope that somehow in his devotions Dr. Mivart will get a clearer view of this Mystery, and co-ordinate his individual views with the wider sweep of its laws, supplementing his philosophy with truths which Physical Science can neither give nor take away.

XX

THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM

The Two Worlds—A Parallel. There is a duality that runs through all our life and through the whole scheme of the universe. It is expressed in various ways,—the First Creation and the New Creation,—the Natural and the Supernatural,—the World of Sight and the World of Faith,—the Old Man (Adam and all we inherit from him) and the New Man (Christ and all we inherit in Him). As the Visible is a parable of the Invisible, there are necessarily many analogies between them. Since we live in both the worlds, these analogies are full of interest and of instruction to us. As the two worlds often mingle most intimately just where they are most closely parallel, they sometimes become to us almost indistinguishable. Who can clearly separate, in himself or in others, Nature and Grace?

The Idea of Force. All who have studied Physical Science and Psychology know that the visible universe can be (theoretically at least) expressed in terms of vibrations. Vibrations are

rhythmic or periodic movements of particles or masses, and are the result of (or, as we say, are caused by) "forces." What is behind the appearances, what movement and force really are, are questions for Philosophy. The scientist is concerned only with "phenomena." From his point of view, every "thing" reveals itself as an aggregate of forces. From the same point of view, man finds himself a centre of a current of force. Force is conveyed to him by nature (light, air, food, &c.), and he gives it out again to nature, producing mighty works which change the face of the globe. But whether to take it in, or to give it out, man always has need of something which shall be instrumental, something which shall be a channel of the force. To give another illuminating touch to the parable or analogy, we may add that these instruments or channels are often out of all proportion to the forces they convey. A dreadnought may be launched by pressing a button.

All Natural Forces Reducible to Light.

Now it is a remarkable thing—or perhaps it was to be expected—that all natural forces can be transformed into one another. There is a mechanical equivalent of heat. Mechanical friction can produce electricity. Electricity and magnetism interchange. Any of them can produce light. Theoretically, therefore, the phenomena of the universe could be expressed in terms of one force, and our natural choice would probably be Light. There is depth in the thought that God began creation by saying, "Let there be light."

Supernatural Light is Grace. We can now point out the parallel. The whole supernatural world is revealed to us as a set of multiform spiritual forces : these forces can be unified : we give them the name of Grace. Grace comes to us incarnationally : that is to say, God has chosen to convey this infinite force to mankind in material channels, beginning with the Human Body of the Word Incarnate. It is no matter of surprise that these instruments of Grace bear no proportion to the Grace they convey. If in the natural order a crystal can cause death, there is no reason why in the supernatural order some simple thing like water or oil should not bring life, if God so chooses. He is the Author of both. I bring this forward, not as an argument, but as an analogy. But, as we have seen before, such analogies may do more than indicate a vague resemblance. There is something fundamental in their community of authorship ; and though we may not be able to prove anything by them to outsiders, they may in ourselves start trains of thought full of illuminative power. Michael Angelo once made a snow man : he also wrought the " Moses " in marble. We could gain much instruction in Art if we were able to compare his snow with his marble, the transient with the everlasting.

Sacramental Grace. When Grace is conveyed to us through any visible channel, we say generally that the effect is sacramental. Thus we say, informally, that Mary's voice of salutation had the sacramental effect of sanctifying John the Baptist in his mother's womb. We may also say that the whole Church of God is a vast Sacrament for all

humanity. The word " sacrament " however has been limited in the development of the Christian language. Let me take an example to show the use of the word. If in eating ordinary bread, I think of the Bread of Life, and bless it and partake of it in the sense of that sacred memory, I make that bread to myself a channel of Grace. The effect is sacramental, though it is not usually called so. If in France (why is that beautiful custom confined to France ?) I take the *pain bénit* at the Offertory, this is again a channel of Grace, and this time it *is* called a sacramental, because of its resemblance to a sacrament. The first might be called a private sacramental, and the second a Church sacramental. When I receive the Bread over which the words of consecration have been spoken, Bread which Divine Power has itself blessed and changed, I then receive what is emphatically called a Sacrament. These are the three grades,—a self-sacramental, a Church-sacramental, and a Sacrament. In the first, the effect is proportioned to my devotion : in the second, I call in my Mother Church to help my weakness : in the third the effect goes beyond all that man or Church can do : I merely try to remove all obstacles and to increase my capacity of receptiveness, and having so prepared I stand by and adore the work of God within me. Self-sacramentals are as abundant as I choose to make them. Church-sacramentals are so numerous (holy water, medals, scapulars, etc.) that it looks as if Holy Mother Church is trying to make the whole world Incarnational. But God-sacramentals, or Sacraments, are so solemn and so efficacious, that they are limited to the most essential needs of the

Mystical Body of Christ. In what I am going to say, I shall relegate self-sacramentals to private devotion. For the other two I shall follow the usual language: God-sacramentals shall be called Sacraments, and Church-sacramentals simply sacramentals. In order, however, that these two nouns may have distinctive adjectives, I think it will be clearer to say that the effects of the former are sacramental, and those of the latter subsacramental. Thus, Grace received through the water of Baptism is received sacramentally, and Grace received through blessing oneself with holy water is received subsacramentally.

The *rationale* of Sacraments and sacramentals is one of the most interesting chapters in the whole range of Theology, and is of the greatest practical importance. It deserves a chapter to itself.

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XXI

ECOLOGY OF SACRAMENTS AND SACRAMENTALS

The Analogy of Blood.

If the Sacraments are beautiful considered each singly, far more are they beautiful when taken all together along with all the visible means of Grace that branch out from them. There is a purposiveness and an effectiveness in the whole system which reveal a Divine plan. A while ago I called the system a network: the analogy is not living enough. Rather it is like the scheme of vessels in the body conveying the red blood from the heart to the digestive canal, thence distributing food to every cell, until returning to the heart the dark blood is sent to the lungs to be purified. The main vessels are like the Sacraments: the capillaries are like the Sacramentals. Baptism, Confirmation and Communion bear the Precious Blood with its nourishment throughout the Body; Penance and Extreme Unction carry the Redeeming Blood with its burden of our sins to be purified in the fresh air of Heaven. Matrimony and Holy Orders are the reproductive

system whereby, while individuals are sanctified, the whole Body advances towards the fullness of its stature.

The Special Position of Extreme Unction. One sometimes detects a feeling, especially among converts, as if the Last Anointing were not quite on a level of inevitability with the other six Sacraments,—as if it were a kind of after-thought. It seems well therefore to provide a buttress, not indeed to the doctrine, but for a better understanding of the doctrine. The universal instinct of the faithful (one of the surest tests in the Church of God) is one of keen anxiety to have the words "Fortified by the rites of the Church" on a death notice. The fundamental doctrine concerned is read partly in the character of our life-long conflict with evil, partly in the revealed teaching about Grace.

The End of our Conflict. Our Adversary looks upon bodily death as the effect of his victory over Adam, and when it takes place he claims the "spoils." Whatever be the meaning of the revelation, we are told he strove with St. Michael over even the *body* of Moses. For that reason he thought to gain a victory over God's Champion, by inflicting death on Him. But he was deceived, because Christ's was a *willing* death: Satan did not, and could not, take that life away. Leviathan, as the Fathers say, was caught "by a hook": what he saw was a vulnerable Humanity; what he did not see was the hidden Divinity which made him captive at the very moment of his fancied victory. Therefore, that we

may understand and may be on our guard at our own *compulsory* death, our Lord said, "I have power to lay down My life and power to take it up again: no one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." And again: "The Prince of this world cometh, and in me he hath not *anything*." "Thus (says St. Augustine) by the death of (Christ's) body, the devil lost man whom he had seduced by free consent and therefore possessed as it were by an indefeasible right."* Our own death, therefore, is Satan's last chance with us, and he fights desperately for his chance. In Baptism he loses his first chance; in Extreme Unction he loses his last.

Securing Our Perseverance. The Anointing is equally seen to be necessary from the doctrine of Perseverance. However holy our life may have been, we may not presume on the end. We cannot merit the first grace; nor can we merit the last. The beginning and the end both belong to God alone. The links of the chain of Grace cohere, but God must be holding the first and the last of them. And where God lays hold, there is a Sacrament. "Wisdom reacheth from end to end mightily, and orders all things sweetly." We see therefore that the Last Anointing is parallel to Baptism.

Harmonies and Extensions. Sacraments mean the establishment and perfecting of the life of Grace in our souls. That life means the

* "Ita diabolus hominem, quem per consensum seductum tanquam jure integro possidebat . . . in ipsa morte carnis amisit." —*De Trin. IV*, 13.

indwelling of the Blessed Trinity. That indwelling means the development of the image of God within us. By Baptism we become sons of the Father ; by Communion we are incorporated into God the Son ; by Confirmation we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus the three Sacraments of Life are the great fruits of that Redemption which restored to us our original inheritance, perfect likeness to our Triune Creator. And what we gain sacramentally we are continually renewing subsacramentally when we bless ourselves with the sign of the Cross " in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

Every Sacrament has its Sacramentals.

The Grace we receive in Baptism is by us perpetually being renewed, in that subsacramental manner, by the effect of Holy Water. This is the Church's favourite external mode of hallowing and purifying, and it is her way of visibly laying hands on those material things which the powers of evil claim as their own. Prayer, as the utterance of the Holy Spirit within us, is naturally affiliated to Confirmation ; and in addition to our private devotion, which becomes more and more abundant in a sacramental atmosphere, the Church puts her own blessing on the Our Father, and the Divine Office, and the Rosary, and chosen prayers for Indulgences, and by that blessing makes them subsacramental in effect. That is to say, we get the full value of our own private devotion, but add immensely to that value by bringing in the devotion of the Bride of Christ. The Eucharist, the hidden Mystery of the Incarnation, is naturally surrounded by

all sorts of subsacramental worship,—the devotion of the Sacred Heart, the ceremonies of Holy Mass, the figures of the Crucified, statues and pictures and medals and emblems of the Head and of the Members of the Mystical Body, all of them conveying under visible forms more spiritual Life than we could find for ourselves. Here also we place the surpassingly beautiful cult of the Ideal of Womanhood, Maidenhood, Motherhood, in her whom it is our delight to hail as Queen of Heaven and of Earth. Catholic Art rejoices in expressing and beautifying this subsacramental symbolism. The Cathedral, whose one purpose is to enshrine the Sacred Presence, speaks of it from altar, walls, windows, floor, ceiling and roof, within and without. The whole west front with its sculptured portals, its niches of Saints, its rose-window, is not indeed directly subsacramental except in so far as it is a portion of a visible presentment of the Heavenly Jerusalem, but it loudly proclaims the Mysteries,—"I am the Door," "I in you and you in me," "I am the Light of the World," "the Rose of Sharon." The Church's music too would easily become subsacramental to us, provided we do not follow the foolish notions of "independent evolution" and "art for art's sake": for the 1st mode in Plain Chant is that of the Blessed Virgin, the 3rd of the Holy Name, the 7th of Heaven, the 8th of the Holy Ghost. The very decorations of the altar are meant to be subsacramental and not a mere display of prettiness. Raphael's highest inspiration tells us the meaning of the candles and flowers in his picture of Theology (the Disputa). The centre of the picture is an altar, quite unadorned, with the Blessed Sacrament

exposed in a monstrance. Four great lines converge upon this centre : (1) the line of Grace from the symbols of the Blessed Trinity ; (2) the line of celestial worship in the rows of Angels ; (3) the line of Revelation in the Apostles and Evangelists ; and (4) the earthly line of Fathers, Doctors, Prelates, Martyrs and Virgins. But where are the lights and the flowers ? Nowhere else than in the human illumination and efflorescence of the Church's sanctity. And that is what the altar-decorations should always be made to mean.

The sacramentals nestling round the other four Sacraments will be treated in the next two chapters.

XXII

THE SACRAMENTS OF PURIFICATION

The Sacramental Analogy Restated.

In the ascending scale of organisms which are a natural prophecy of the Divine Organism, for the growth of which this poor dunghill of a world was created, every higher form embodies in itself the contrivances of the lower ones, adding fresh ones of its own. The step from sense to intellect made no difference to this law; nor does the step from the natural to the supernatural. The Incarnation draws all things to itself. It was to be expected therefore that since all organisms make special adaptations for (1) germination, (2) resistance against environment, (3) nourishment, (4) purification by excretion, (5) protection against threatened death, (6) growth, and (7) reproduction, all these adaptations would be found visible and supernatural, in the great Incarnational Organism as well. These seven processes are the vehicles of life—vegetative life to the plant, sentient life to the animal, intellectual life to man, Grace to the Incarnation in all its members. Now the visible

vehicles of Grace are Sacraments with their cognate sacramentals,—this time including self-sacramentals, i.e. all those visible efforts which through Grace the earth-bound soul makes to rise above earth, such as prayer, acts of virtue, etc. We have already seen that Baptism corresponds to germination, Confirmation to resistance, Holy Communion to nourishment. So too the Sacrament of Penance corresponds to the process of purification, Extreme Unction to protection against death, Matrimony to growth, Holy Orders to reproduction. The analogy is complete.

Confession. Protestants have retained the other five Sacraments in some sort of sacramental form, but Penance and the Last Anointing they reject, the former because they refuse the discipline of the Third Mystery (most of all, Confession), and the latter because they ignore the doctrine of final perseverance,—thinking that one who has eternal life now necessarily has it eternally. This last doctrine, however, is made so superabundantly clear in Holy Writ, that all we can do is to advise our separated brethren to read their Bible again. But the matter of Confession needs a little common-sense talk. It is not an additional burden imposed by ecclesiastical authority. It is not a humiliating observance commanded by God in righteous punishment of sin. It is an act imposed by the sinner on himself as one of the essential consequences of his own sin. There is an elementary law of justice which demands that amends shall be made where injury has been done. By every sin a man injures Almighty God, and the act of contrition becomes

necessary. He injures his own self, and self-humiliation becomes essential to his moral recovery. But far beyond any injury he does to himself is the injury done to the Body of Christ of which he is a member. To the Body of Christ therefore it is an ultimate law of justice that he should make amends. And it is not enough that amends should be offered ; they must be acceptable and accepted. Seeing that he has not "wherewithal to pay" the only chance he has is open acknowledgment and appeal for mercy. Now it is quite conceivable that this necessary humiliation (which is still obligatory on Protestants as well as Catholics) might not have been made part of the Sacrament of Penance. We might have been commanded to fulfil that duty first, without therefrom receiving the sacramental Grace, and this fulfilment might have been made merely a preliminary to some other form. It is the loving-kindness of God that has made the mortification of justice also the vivification of mercy. To Catholics, the Sacrament of Penance (which includes Confession) is not a burden, but a highly-valued privilege. It is like a naughty child, at last laying aside his obstinacy and silly pride, returning to his true self and seeking the sweetest of all reconciliations by sobbing out his sorrow in his Mother's arms. We are all children still.

Confession in Practice. In the earliest days, the necessary apology to the Church was openly made in the congregation which the penitent attended, and after due penance, consisting usually of temporary exclusion from the Mysteries, the recon-

ciliation was equally public. There must even then have been exceptions. For example, priests were not allowed the privilege of public confession and absolution,—not because their fall was lightly considered, but because of the shock to the reverence of the people. Similarly, I hardly suppose (though I do not know if such cases are recorded) that a man, still less a woman, would be expected publicly to confess facts which might break up the home. In such cases probably there was private specific confession, and the authorities being satisfied might decide what it would be enough to say in the church. But for many centuries now the Church has appointed single priests to be, in normal cases, her plenipotentiary representatives to receive the necessary confession, at the same time enduing them with her power of sacramental forgiveness. This is what is meant by a priest "having faculties."

Continuity of Purification.

The instincts of the faithful, to whom the material discipline of the Church is not a burden but a privilege, lead them to have recourse to this Sacrament far more often than might be considered necessary to raise them from the death of the soul. In fact, the more innocent they are, the more they come to be purified. In their minds Confession and Communion are closely linked together. The instinct is right, because the Sacrament of Penance with all its accompanying sacramentals corresponds to the whole process of purification in the Organism, and that has to be as continuous as nutrition. For our life we take in air and food, and these are corrupted by ministering to

our body. This corruption has to be got rid of as fast as it is produced, or the body would be poisoned. Our Lord Himself uses this analogy in very plain words. By the lungs, the skin, the liver, the kidneys and the alimentary canal we are perpetually purifying ourselves, and if the action of any of these is impeded, the health of the body suffers. The parallel is easily followed out. Prayer, mortification, the flame of Divine charity, and especially the Sacrament of Penance do this work for our souls.

Accessory Sacramentals. The process of purgation is specially emphasized in the time of Lent. The ashes on Ash Wednesday and the palms on Palm Sunday are sacramentals to help our devotion; and in order to link the two together, like brackets inclosing the whole of Lent, the ashes of each year are made by burning the palms of the last. The Church on earth makes a kind of corporate Confession in Lent in order that with pure white robes she may make her corporate Communion at Easter.

Indulgences. I cannot understand the storm that has been raised about Indulgences. If, as is most clearly stated in Scripture, our Blessed Lord handed over to His disciples the same kingdom as He had received from His Father, as well as the power to forgive or retain sins, it is evident that He has made His Bride our Queen and Mother, to exercise over us all the sway of government and discipline and all the prerogatives of mercy. Her punishments—and even God's punishments are entrusted to her care

—are gratefully received by her willing penitents, and she manages these punishments in her own way according to times and circumstances. Why therefore there should be any demur to her remitting such punishments for valid reasons, it is hard to see. Such remittings are called Indulgences. Now Indulgences, not being a conferring of Grace but only a lessening of temporal punishment, are not directly sacramentals; but indirectly they come to have a great subsacramental effect because of the Church's *valid reasons*. She chooses works of prayer, alms or penance, and attaches indulgences to them; when we try to gain these indulgences, the works we do are the Church's as well as our own, and therefore they have a subsacramental effect.

This is not a controversial book, so I need not go out of my way to answer the attacks made either on Penance or on Indulgences. They are mostly misrepresentations, or sometimes merely misunderstandings, and with the right doctrine, Catholics know what to do with them.

Extreme Unction. We have already seen that the Last Anointing may in a sense be called the Sacrament of Final Perseverance,—the Omega of which Baptism is the Alpha. In the Homeric battles, the keenest fighting was over the bodies of fallen heroes, lest the enemy should capture the body and the spoils. So, in Extreme Unction with its whole array of prayers and blessings and subsacramental rites, Holy Mother Church fights over death-beds for the full possession of her children in both soul and body.

And in so fighting she not only rescues the dying, but comforts and instructs the living. The whole scene is beautifully paraphrased in Newman's Dream of Gerontius. The lighting of the blessed candle, the traditional prayers for the dying, the crucifix, the indulgenced ejaculations, the specially privileged blessings, and after death the consecration of the coffin and of the grave, all make us feel as well as know that she has the right to cry, " O Death, where is thy victory ? " Knowing the importance of the end as of the beginning, she uses all the powers she has, powers divine, powers spiritual and powers incarnational ; she relaxes for the hour of death all her rules of discipline and extends faculties to all who have once received the priestly power. As at Baptism she said, " Go forth, foul spirit, from this child, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete," so in the Last Anointing she says to the dying, " In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, may all the power of Satan be nullified in thee, through the laying on of our hands, and through the invocation of all holy Angels, Archangels, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins and all the Saints together." At last, when the fight is over, and the Requiem is reached, she signalizes her victory by praying "that the standard-bearer St. Michael may marshal them into Eternal Light."

XXIII

THE SACRAMENTS OF GROWTH

The Divine Organism grows spiritually by the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and bodily by the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Holy Orders. The threefold anointing of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King is of course communicated in due measure to all His members. The whole Body is prophetical, sacerdotal and royal. To bless, to consecrate, to rule, to judge, to teach are priestly powers; but every man can exercise them towards himself; he needs no new sacrament for them; they flow from his Baptism. That is to say, besides his natural power and duty of self-rule, self-judgment and prayer, he can as a member of Christ bless himself, judge himself, consecrate himself with the Church's authority as well as his own. A father of a family can and should bless and rule his children (shame on many who will not use this privilege), not merely with the right that every pagan has, but with the power that devolves upon him as a member of the Mystical

Body. Again he needs no special sacrament for this : it flows from the Sacrament of Matrimony. But as soon as these functions have to be exercised for the whole Church of God, the principle applies that universal life requires universal sacramentals, and in the Incarnation universal sacramentals have been established as Sacraments.

The Church's Maternity

There is no sex in the thought of the Divine. The Motherhood of God is as fruitful an analogy as the Fatherhood. Our Lord Himself indicated this when He said, looking at His disciples, " These are my mother and my brethren." From the spiritual side of us, the generation of new members of the Body of Christ is both fatherhood and motherhood. The Church is a Virgin-Mother, as Mary is. The womb of the Mystical Body is that portion of it which is differentiated for the purposes of spiritual birth or regeneration. The whole Body, in the supernatural as in the natural, aids in this function, but the function being universal has to be specialized. This is what the sacerdotal function means. The womb therefore of the Body of Christ is its Hierarchy. St. Paul (by mystery, not by metaphor) calls it fatherhood : Our Lord, by saying to St. Peter " Feed my lambs," calls it motherhood. Christ not only instituted the Sacrament of Holy Orders but Himself ordained His Apostles, conferring on them the Kingdom given to Him by the Father, the Prophetic Office in the command " Go and teach all nations," the Priesthood in the power to bless and consecrate, and the Judgment in the words, " Whose sins you forgive,

they are forgiven: whose sins you retain, they are retained."

The Development of Holy Orders.

By creating the Apostles "dispensers of the mysteries" (and mysteries and sacraments are the same word), our Lord gave to His Church the power to specialize its members for this function according to the needs of its life. The highly complex Hierarchy of to-day, from the Pope to the newest tonsured cleric, is the result of the normal growth of the Third Mystery. The distinction between Bishop and Priest often seems vague at the beginning: the creation of Deacons is on record: the gift of Minor Orders followed in due course. The Bride of Christ regulated her own life as the demands of her environment needed. One would not expect diocesan Bishops before there were dioceses. In an organism, differentiation of tissue proceeds along the lines of the development of life. Let me give a scientific analogy. If we take a very young seedling, treat it chemically so as to make it transparent and put it under the microscope, we see that very near the root-tip the cells seem at first sight all alike, very thin-walled and able to send on sap as freely as a wood-vessel. But a few millimetres above the tip we see the main vessels already formed, continuing from there to the very end of the first leaves. Bringing the eye down again, we see that the vessels do not stop where we first descried them, but are more and more delicately discernible right down to the root-tip. In the New Testament the Church of God, the Vine, was a seedling. Tracing our Hierarchy back,

we see that all the essentials of it were there from the day of Pentecost, but the needs of growth have through the centuries indefinitely ramified the vessels and hardened their walls. The growth has been so gradual, so visible, and so consistent, that no breach of continuity can be discovered, and to say that the Papacy, the Episcopate and the Priesthood, such as we see them at work to-day, are not the living prolongation of the day of Pentecost, is to say that the True Vine died in the first century and a weed has taken its place.

The Cognate Sacramentals. Besides being habitually the dispenser of Baptism, Penance, Eucharist and Anointing, the priest is a continuous fountain of sacramentals. A good priest will turn almost anything into subsacramental effect for himself and for others. The very sight of him, to his own humility and joy, calls up the faith and reverence of his flock, especially of the little children. He bears about with him the aroma of all the Sacraments like a personal aura. It may be said I am sketching the ideal. No, by the grace of God I am describing the reality. His exercise of the divine powers of blessing and consecrating, administering and sacrificing, are a perpetual humiliation and sanctification to himself and a dispensing of the Mysteries to the faithful. I speak of the ordinary good priest and pastor. If ever he is unfaithful, he does commensurate harm: but over such lapses the *sancta plebs Dei* reverently and sorrowfully draws a veil. And that veil I also draw. There is no power or privilege ever conferred on men which

our poor humanity has not sometimes abused. Among the Apostles there was an Iscariot. But on the whole, the Church on earth recognises in its priesthood the Motherhood and Fatherhood divine: souls are regenerated and rejuvenated, the lambs of the flock are fed, and "the manifold wisdom of God is made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places through the Church, according to the eternal purpose which he made in Christ Jesus our Lord . . . from whom the whole body, being compactly and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying (or building-up) of itself in charity."

Matrimony. Granted the Second and Third Mysteries, the Sacrament of Marriage follows almost as a logical corollary. The Divine Plan of Regeneration necessarily absorbs, elevates and consecrates the also Divine Plan of Generation. Even in the natural order, such reverence as humanity possesses has always gone to the mystery of heredity. "There is a kind of awe about motherhood," says Sophocles. But when it was revealed that the union of man with woman and its consequent fruitfulness are but a visible sign, a prophetic symbol, an effective subdivision, of the higher Union of the Divine Bridegroom with His Divine Bride, the sacramentality became obvious. Marriage was already a sacramental in the Old Law: in the New, shadow passed into reality, and the sacramental became a Sacrament. As circumcision passed into Baptism, as the holocausts passed into the Cross, as the

Paschal Banquet passed into Holy Communion, as the shew-bread passed into the Real Presence, as the lustrations of water and of blood passed into the Sacraments of Purification, as the priesthood of Melchisedech and of Aaron passed into Holy Orders, so the already sacred conjugal tie passed into the Incarnational Marriage and became something Divine. Instead therefore of disbelievers calling upon us to produce texts proving the institution of this Sacrament, we should rather challenge them to produce texts showing that Christ said it was *not* a Sacrament. Had He said so, we should have been bewildered, and should be sorrowfully asking, " Are there then limits to the Love of the Bridegroom for His Bride ? "

St. Paul's Teaching.

It was on this ground that St. Paul based his beautiful doctrine,—not lowering the status of woman, but lifting it to the plane where service is perfect freedom. Catholic womanhood has never uttered any complaint against St. Paul. The whole passage (Eph. v.) should be read in its entirety, and it will be seen that the sacramentality of Marriage is not so much proclaimed as presupposed, and that the Mystery is even more exacting on the man than on the woman. " Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord ; giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father ; being subject one to another in the fear of Christ. Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord : because the husband

is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. He is the saviour of his body. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives (love imposes more obligations than obedience does), as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it: that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life: that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church: because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament (or mystery); but I speak in Christ and in the Church."

Graphically Illustrated.

Elsewhere St. Paul applies both to marriage and to adultery the acid test, "for you are not your own." In other words, in the Divine Organism there are no isolated individuals. That has to be remembered even in the natural order. One of Shakespeare's most striking tragedies is that of Coriolanus, who acted "as if a man were author of himself and knew no other kin." The only really isolated individuals are those who have made the supreme tragedy and are now in hell, where all ties are corrupted. "It is of the essence of charity,"

says St. Augustine, "that a man be bound by many ties." Let us help our thought by a scientific analogy, remembering that God's natural word is always a symbol and a prophecy of His revelation. In chemistry, they tell us, atoms normally never stand alone, but combine to form molecules: and a substance is determined by its molecules, not by its atoms. Two substances might have exactly the same number and kind of atoms and yet be entirely different: but two substances that have the same number and kind of molecules must be the same. In the Church of God the substantiating molecule is not the individual, but the family. Let us illustrate graphically. If **A** represent the Divine Bridegroom, and B the Divine Bride, and *a b* individual human units (*a* for men, *b* for women), then each Christian is not *a* or *b* simply, but (**A** *a* B) or (**A** *b* B). No man ought to dare to approach a woman except in the memory that he represents the Bridegroom, and she the Bride. Thus a Christian marriage is not simply (*a b*), but [**A** (*a b*) B]. If any man says that this graph makes him feel small, it will do him good and nourish his humility, but he may be assured that in the graph his importance is enormously exaggerated. Every Christian, then, is part of the Incarnational Marriage, and cannot enter into a human marriage without that also becoming Incarnational, i.e. sacramental. This enables us to understand the overwhelming importance of this 7th Sacrament, and why the Church will not under any circumstances allow it to be dissoluble in this world or in any way to pass out of her control. It is a matter of life and death for the Organism.

The Consecrated Single Life. The same train of thought shows (1) why the Church puts the virginal life above the humanly married, and at the same time (2) why the religious life is not an 8th Sacrament. The life of a Christian child is necessarily one of sexual purity, of unquestioning obedience and of entire detachment from the world. It is a sweet picture in human colours and proportions of the angelic life. When an adult man or woman chooses to prolong spiritual childhood ("Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven"), and prefers during this earthly sojourn to anticipate the angelic life of eternity, he or she is obviously trying to do a higher thing than human marriage. Yet the Church has never considered it a Sacrament, because it institutes no new grade of being. It simply emphasizes the marriage tie that has existed from Baptism. The graph of the virginal life is [**A** (*a*B)] or [(**A***b*) B]. Solemn religious profession, therefore, though no Sacrament, is a true marriage and the highest of all sacramentals. Theologians teach that it has the same perfect effect as Baptism. The Church never thinks of her monks and nuns as bachelors and spinsters. Every nun as a rule wears a wedding ring. In Ireland she used to be called Mrs., and in France always Madame.

The Marriage of the Blessed Virgin. The highest marriage that has ever been celebrated unites the Sacrament with the sacramental, the wedded status with angelic detachment, all the human in it being absorbed into the Divine. And it

was by far the most fruitful marriage the world has ever seen, for from it proceeded, by a way purely Divine, the Redeemer of mankind and the regeneration of all humanity. Its graph would be [{**A** (*b*}{*a*) B}]. It will be noticed that in this one case the woman takes the higher place. Nevertheless Mary was obedient to Joseph.

XXIV

SOME DISCUSSIONS

The Minister of Matrimony. I do not know if it is essential to a Sacrament that it should have an appointed minister. St. Thomas does not seem to have discussed the question with regard to Matrimony, and it is not characteristic of him to leave out essentials. Baptism, we know, may in an emergency be administered by anybody. The other five, not only normally but necessarily, are in the hands of the "dispensers of the mysteries." But who administers Matrimony? It is certainly not the priest, who is no more than the official witness of the Church, authorized by her to give her subsacramental blessing. Some people are surprised, or even mildly shocked, when they hear for the first time the commonly given answer that the bride and bridegroom are themselves the ministers. This answer is to be taken in the sense that by their united action the contracting parties bind themselves to each other, thus establishing a bond or union to which the Lord has attached the power to symbolize and represent the eternal marriage of the

Divine Bridegroom with His Bride. This symbolic force of the bond entails sacramental grace, which is conveyed, as in all sacraments, through the channel of the symbol itself, while it necessarily flows from Him who is the principal Bridegroom, hallowing and sanctioning in the Church each individual wedding. The Church in harmony with Him adds her sub-sacramental blessing.

Consent with Suspended Effect. Marriage being a contract as well as a sacrament, points of Canon Law are involved which sometimes make difficult reading for later times. It is not the purpose of this book to enter into such questions ; but one of them contains an illuminating principle. It is an example of how the Church gains victories for liberty without resorting to revolutionary measures. The Law of the Roman Empire subjected a girl to the power of her father until she passed into the power of her husband. This meant that a woman had no effective say in her own destiny. The Church secured that liberty for woman by the very simple device of " suspended consent." After the marriage ceremony, when the father's power ceased, the bride was granted a month of reflection, if she so desired, before the husband's power began. If during that interval she refused consummation of the marriage and decided for the virginal life, the nuptial ceremony was considered not to have received ratification, and neither father nor would-be husband had the right to object. This explains a good deal in medieval history. It tells, for example, how St. Ethelreda could be Queen of North-

umbria by marriage and yet upheld by ecclesiastical authority in running away from her "husband" and founding a religious community.

Rationale of Single Blessedness.

From the very beginning the Church's preference for the virginal life has been unmistakable. Mary herself was for refusing the Divine Motherhood on any other terms. But the Prince of this World has strong objections to it, and his allies wage ceaseless war against it. As long as this war takes the form of abuse, it is not for our dignity here and now to take note of it. Dogs will bark down in the valley. But sometimes it takes the form of gentle remonstrance clad in the sheepskin of sympathy. The life, they hint, is an unnatural one, dangerously so. Convents at best must be homes of refuge for blighted hearts. No good can come from thwarting essential instincts. Considering how many among themselves are driven to the single life by social conditions, and how many others choose it for intellectual or philanthropic reasons, they should reflect that they are using very carelessly a two-edged razor blade. Those who talk of "blighted hearts" are people who have never seen a noviciate. But all of them miss the great truth that in every organism energies inhibited in one direction may be utilised in another.

The Principle of Pruning.

If a plant is hindered in excessive formation of wood or leaves, it expresses itself in more flower and fruit. The analogy is used by our Lord: "Every branch in Me

that beareth fruit, My Father will purge it that it may bring forth more fruit." The whole complexus of human activities which in the widest sense go to make up the home, may be diverted. These energies may be directed to lower ends, and then they brutalize a man, or they may be lifted to higher purposes, and then they spiritualize a man. Even in the natural order there is a partial inverse proportion between intellectual pursuits and progenitive power which ought to serve as a hint towards the exclusive demands which the supernatural life was to make. With a little knowledge of the life of the plant, the analogy may be more clearly read in the culture of the Vine, our Lord's chosen type. All the sap ascends through the wood vessels; it is elaborated by the leaves, and then sent down for the good of the whole plant by tiny tubes just under the bark. Vine-dressers have an instrument something like scissors which can just crush the green bark and the tubes under it without injuring the wood. They call this process ring-barking. Here and there they see a very promising bunch of young grapes: shortly below this bunch they ring-bark the shoot. The result is that the sap comes up freely; the leaves elaborate it, but the elaborated sap cannot be distributed over the plant and is compelled to put all its work into the growing bunch of fruit. In the True Vine, a religious community is a twig ring-barked for the production of more fruit.

Is there no Danger?

Still filled with that superfluous and quite unwanted sympathy, our critics ask if there is not danger in thwarting

natural instincts. Is there no danger! What a question to ask in the thick of the fight between Grace and Sin! Of course there is danger. There is danger in every kind of work man undertakes, and if a man will not work there is the danger of diseases incident to sloth. There is always, for example, danger in a dam. If a river overflows its banks without control, it only makes swamps and stagnant pools: but if it is dammed higher up, it usefully irrigates the whole country. Dams may leak, and sometimes burst. Nevertheless, men go on building dams. Every priest and religious is a little dam, and a Religious Order is a big one. The Church knows the risks and takes them. Let our super-sympathetic critic go amongst the ordinary laity, whose sons and daughters are in question, and ask them if they want married priests and married teachers. This is one of the cases where the *sensus communis fidelium* is a supreme test.

The Final Criterion.

As in so many other cases, when a mystery has to be told and a demand has to be made on our faith, our Blessed Lord takes the onus on Himself and speaks it out boldly in its extremest form. It is then that He says those uncomfortable things which Protestants wish He hadn't said. It is only Catholics who follow Him whithersoever He goeth. What does He say on this point? "All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the

kingdom of heaven. He that can take, let him take it." The Catholic Church has taken it.

Criticism from Enemies. Nothing in this world escapes criticism. There is of course much that deserves it, but nothing is so perfect as to escape it. Indeed, in a world which is so widely in subjection to its Prince the Adversary, it may almost be said that criticism increases in proportion to perfection. If God sent an Archangel to rule any country in Europe to-day, he would be the most unpopular king in the world. God did send His Son to rule His people Israel, and He was criticised more than any other man has been. Some criticism is the involuntary tribute of Evil to Good. The world remains pretty much the same sort of thing through the ages, and if the Church of God is (as we have seen) the extension of the Incarnation through time and space, it is a consolation to her that she has just the same sort of criticism as her Head,—all the Pharisees and Puritans, all the Modernists and Sadducees, all the politicians and Herodians, all the demons and the sons of Belial: their unanimity is remarkable, and there is nothing else than the Catholic Church against which they combine. Such opposition to truth is to be expected in this world, and there is no use in arguing with it. As Hobbes of Malmesbury said, if ever it should be to the interest of any powerful body of men that the three angles of a plane rectilineal triangle should not be equal to two right angles, there would at once arise a philosophical school which should deny

that famous theorem. Criticism that springs from animosity is not amenable to argument.

Criticism from Strangers. A great proportion of the objections levelled against the Church's ways arise merely from unfamiliarity. Obviously the Church must have some ways, and these ways must be more or less strange to outsiders. There are English and American travellers who find fault with almost everything the French people do. I once knew an Englishman in Rome who was constantly saying, "Well, I must say they *are* a rum people." Such persons would object to the table manners of our Blessed Lord because they were Oriental. Such critics have not yet got beyond the social and intellectual level of the man pilloried in *Punch*, who said, "I say, Bill, here's a stranger: let's 'eave 'alf a brick at him." If we want peace, we merely dodge the half-bricks and get out of range as speedily as possible. I do not deny that sometimes, in defence of the Church, I have countered half-bricks with chunks of granite; but just now I am in a peaceful mood. We will waste no time over that lot.

Criticism from Enquirers. Sometimes good folk who have formed their notion of God's Church from what they fancy to be the true interpretation of the New Testament, are puzzled at new manifestations which they find in history or in contemporary life. They see nothing in the Bible like St. Simeon Stylites or St. Benedict Labre. A man who knows the oak only as a sapling might

thus object to the full-grown tree. "The oak I know," he might say, "has delicate green bark, not this mass of rugged boles." To this the only reply is that the true test of an oak is the production of acorns. If the acorn gives us a sapling again whenever you want one, it is the right tree. If a man is a true enquirer, that is the point to which he will address himself.

Less Spiritual? But, such a man might say, does not this use of externals, the whole round of sacramentals, make the Christian life less spiritual? I reply, does the eating of a mutton chop make you less intellectual? I know there is nothing intellectual in a chop; but unless I eat it, or its equivalent, my lofty intellectual life cannot get on. Not even our most subtle thoughts are without their physiological concomitants. *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu.* The principle of association and suggestion avails throughout the intellectual life. As Kant said (in an unusual burst of poetry), the dove cleaving the air and feeling the resistance might imagine its progress would be more unimpeded in a vacuum; but if you put it in a vacuum, it simply falls to the ground. The Church frankly acknowledges the influence of the body on the soul as well as of the soul on the body. Put yourself in a bodily attitude of reverence, and it is easier to pray. Put something before the eye, and its corresponding thought arises in the mind. It cannot be too often repeated that man's highest life is not merely spiritual, but Incarnational.

Superstition ? Such puzzled people often murmur something about superstition. Let us face this bogey or ghost quite frankly, and lay it at once. If a poor woman, hoping to be cured, kisses with worship a mere material thing, like the hem of Christ's garment, is that superstition ? No, we indignantly deny ; it is a high act of faith. If a silly girl picks up a horse-shoe and flings it over her shoulder for luck, is that superstition ? We should reply, it is probably a harmless joke ; but if she really thinks that that bit of rusty iron can by its own inherent power supply for Divine Providence, then of course it is a degraded superstition. But I doubt if there is really a girl so silly in the world. Take the human case of a lover who treasures a kid glove : suppose a scientist were to prove to him that a dead, tanned, manufactured bit of goat's skin was not an object worthy of such high idealism, the lover would reply, " You dunderheaded idiot, do you suppose it is for the sake of the leather that I cherish it ? " Superstition in religion means attributing to material objects an inherent power of conferring spiritual grace. But any material thing may by association (like the hem of a garment), or by divine institution (like the water of baptism), or by suggestion (like a medal or picture), have conferred upon it a spiritual significance infinitely above itself. The whole visible universe is but the hem of the garment of the Divine Bride as she goes forth to meet her Bridegroom. Nor do you ever find a Catholic man, woman or child who falls below this idealism. I have had a good deal to do with children, and with the simplest and most untrained minds in God's

Church, and have never yet come across that particular form of idiocy which attributes the grace of God to the material things which subserve the uses of devotion.

Idolatry ? The crude accusation of image-worship is, I believe, no longer in vogue ; though sometimes it is hinted that, while educated Catholics know better, the peasantry are unable to distinguish between the representation and the reality. As a matter of fact, the peasantry often know their religion better than many educated folk. Nobody now, even in the natural order, attributes the electric force to the wire or the switch. People who utter these stupidities against us are themselves guilty of contradicting the Word of God. One of the clearest prophecies was "The idols he shall utterly abolish." Wherever Christianity comes, image-worship disappears, for the simple reason that idols are at once by their worshippers explained away into symbols. The author of the Book of Job felt the temptation to worship the moon : it is a phase that has passed out of existence. Even when the Israelites were tempted to join the idolatry of their neighbours they were never in danger of worshipping their own Seraphim on the Mercy-seat : they were prevented by the reality of the Shechinah or Divine manifestation. We now have the true Shechinah all over the world, and that has fulfilled the prophecy. The ultra-Protestants, however, attribute idolatry to the very Shechinah or Eucharist itself. That is because they deny God's Mystery. Even if they were right, it would not be idolatry. When people outside the Church worship what they take to

be the Eucharist, though the consecration may not have been valid, we do not accuse them of idolatry. If during our Lord's life on earth a man who knew Him to be God thought he heard His voice in the dark and knelt to adore, though it turned out to be somebody else, there would be no idolatry : the adoration would go to Him for whom it was intended, the mistake would rest with the individual. But there is no mistake about the Real Presence in the Church of God. The idols He has utterly abolished.

XXV

THE RETROGRADE MOVEMENT

The Difficulty of Perseverance in Faith.

We have studied the elaborate process by which for thousands of years the mind of man was brought to a state of preparedness for the reception of Divine Mystery. The great triumph of Grace and Truth culminated on the Day of Pentecost. From that day the task of the Church of God has been to draw all nations and individuals up to that level and to keep them there. For the mind of man is never stationary : as soon as it ceases from the Upward Striving, it begins to join the Downward Drift. This is as true intellectually as morally. Humanity is restive under the touch of the Infinite. The causes which make it hard for a man to receive the Word of God are still operating to make it hard for him to retain it. The man who said " I was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision " put the seal on his work when towards the end he said, " I have kept the Faith," and he continually mortified himself " lest after having preached to others I myself should be a

castaway." Both receiving and retaining depend on faithfulness to the interior grace given by God. Of those who did not receive, our Lord said, " Therefore you hear them not because you are not of God " ; and of those who failed to retain, St. John said, " They went out from us because they were not of us."

Heresy goes down by the way it came up.

We need not enquire further into the initial refusal to believe, but history gives us a very interesting general rule for the intellectual process whereby faith is wholly or partially lost. I say " intellectual," because there are always moral causes which are sometimes obvious, but more often secret, which we have to leave to the great Judge. One truth, however, is attested by universal experience,—no one ever gave up any portion of the Catholic Faith in order to reach a higher moral level. Intellectually, then, humanity has this at least to say for itself. Those who have once heard and held the Word of God, do not depart from it by way of direct contradiction. When the Good Shepherd has led His flock to the Pentecostal heights, those who do go astray go gradually. Some few may fling themselves over the cliffs, but most of them depart by the way they came up. The upward path is that which rises from the shadows of Metaphor to the realities of Mystery : the downward path is that which returns through the shadows to nothingness. Is is the characteristic of heresy that it turns Mystery to Metaphor.

An Historic Bird's-Eye View.

In the first century, Cerinthus distinguished between Jesus and Christ (the Anointed). The human Jesus became the Divine Christ, he taught, when the Dove descended upon Him in Baptism. The Mystery of the Incarnation was divided and partly brought within the scope of human reason. The Humanity was acknowledged as real: the Divinity was relegated to the external and phenomenal. In St. John's forceful phrase, they *dissolved* Jesus.

In the second century, it was the Human Life that began to fade away into mirage. The Docetae said the Divinity was real, but the Humanity was only phenomenal. Thus they said our Lord's whole life and death was a prolonged Theophany, or divine appearance. That is why they abstained from the Eucharist, because in the mind of the faithful the Eucharist was the highest reality.

In the third century, the difficulty shifted from the Incarnation to the Trinity. When a Mystery is far enough removed, its pressure is not so keenly felt. Noëtus held that the Word and the Spirit are only phases of the Divine, or external modes of apprehending the One Divine Person. Phases and metaphor come to much the same thing.

In the fourth century, we have the subtle Greek intellect trying to bring the simple but superhuman doctrine of the Trinity under the intricate but finite laws of logic. Arianism introduced the famous iota into the word homo-ousios (of the same substance) and made it homoi-ousios (of similar substance). The very word shows that a Mystery has been reduced to a

Metaphor. That iota made the whole difference between naught and infinity. But it must be remembered that the Body of the Word Incarnate was once, physically speaking, a single microscopic cell. That single cell outweighed the whole universe. We do not value supernatural values by physical sizes. I do not know anything that stamps the stigma of stupidity more firmly upon Rationalism and Protestantism than this constantly repeated sneer of "Christendom fighting for an iota."

In the fifth century, difficulties began to be Roman rather than Greek. Philosophy for the Greeks: social problems for the Romans. Pelagius turned to the concrete expression of the personality in the will, instead of the abstract essence of the hypostasis. The brooding mystery of grace over all our actions he reduced to a mere externality. For him, grace made no *real* difference.

I need not go on in detail. The process shifted from mystery to mystery, as from century to century. In the ninth, the Eucharist was for the first time explained away into a mere memorial rite. A little later on, we have the Mystical Body explained away into an invisible Church. And from that time on, sects multiplied until their name was Legion.

Down to the Depths. In our own times, such Sacraments as have been verbally retained are reduced to mere figurative rites. The Trinity and the Incarnation are nominally held by Protestants because they can be conveniently kept at arm's length, but the true Mystery spirit has been abandoned.

Finally, we have Modernism, which puts religious Truth in a different category from logical Truth, and professes to be able to assent to all the Four Mysteries without asserting the reality of any of them. When they reach that stage, they are no longer on the mount : they have gone down to the Valley of the Shadow of Death. They wanted a Shadow : they have got it.

XXVI

THE FOUR MYSTERIES TOGETHER

The Unity of the Four.

In treating of the Four Mysteries one by one, we found it difficult to keep them separate. And indeed they are inseparable. They are the One Thought of God which explains the whole of Creation with all its relations to the Creator. They are the Christian Idea, which is the single subject portrayed for the intellect by all Catholic Theology and Philosophy, for the imagination by all Catholic Art, for the will by all the Church's ascetical experience, for the heart by the mystical teaching of all her Saints. These things are almost peculiar to her because she alone has the One Idea. Heresies and schisms live (in so far as they live at all) on what they have partially retained, or remembered, or imitated from her : they have originated nothing : they have only tried to break up the Idea.

The Gulf between Finite and Infinity.

At first sight, it might be thought that the revelation of the Trinity of Persons in the One Godhead is something entirely apart : that

all the action of God on Creation is *ad extra*, and the internal relations of the Divine Personalities seem to be utterly beyond the range of the finite. So at least it seemed to Kant, the greatest of all Protestant thinkers, when he said, "What does it matter to me whether there are three Persons in the Godhead or twenty?" It is true that even a philosopher might have reflected on some forth-shadowing of a Triune God in the Goodness, Truth and Beauty of the material universe. It is true that he might have gone further and agreed with Catholic philosophers in seeing an image of the Trinity in the memory, the understanding and the will of humanity. But these, after all, are only shadows and images. We can recognise them only *after* the Trinity has been revealed. We cannot argue from human nature to the Inner Being of the Godhead.

This Gulf has been Bridged.

But what if God has drawn part of the Creation into Himself? And what if we are the part of Creation so drawn? Is His action upon us then merely *ad extra*? Already we appropriate Providence to the Father, and the breathing of life to the Holy Ghost, though both are the work of the Trinity as one: but we do more than *appropriate* Redemption to God the Son. We attribute it to Him, and cannot say that either the Father or the Holy Ghost is our Redeemer. This is because Redemption is a Human-Divine work, and God the Son alone became Man. Now Redemption means that we are incorporated into the Word Incarnate, and therefore into special real relations with the

Father on one side and with the Holy Ghost on the other. The doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, therefore, is not a far-away glimpse of the glory of God revealed, notionally only, to our faith. It enters into our supernatural experience. It is for us, not merely theoretically, but practically and really, the basis of our whole economy of Grace. As Scheeben says, "There is nevertheless a Divine activity *ad extra*, by which the Trinity of Persons is to us of real and substantial significance, when, that is, the Divine Persons, through the medium of their common action, extend and continue, or imitate and reproduce *ad extra* their own exterior correlations, and thereby originate an order of things (the New Creation) which becomes known to us as a real manifestation of the inner Heart of that Mystery, and which only in and through that Mystery can be by us radically and thoroughly grasped and understood." By being identified with the Incarnate Word (the Second Mystery) especially in the Sacrament of His Love (the Fourth Mystery), we receive a real and not merely metaphorical Sonship (the Third Mystery), and thus by God's own ineffable secret we enter into the recesses of that Life wherein the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (the First Mystery). We do not receive only the graces of the Spirit : we receive the Spirit Himself. Thus we learn to dare to say with St. Peter that we are partakers of the Divine Nature.

Pantheism ? Here we may be accused of a sort of subtle Pantheism. If so, the Apostles

are in the dock along with us, and we are not afraid. Pantheism is the pride of the creature making more than the most of itself and claiming consubstantiality with God by its own nature. In the Christian Mystery, the creature reduces itself to nothing, empties itself of all fancied reality, and allows the superabundant Reality of the Infinite to pour itself into the abyss which Humility has thus formed. "No longer I, but Christ that liveth in me." And, as usual, the boldest statement of the Mystery comes from the lips of our Lord Himself, almost taking away our breath by the ultimate significance of His words: "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken, and scripture cannot be broken; do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?"

The Demand of Faith.

Now this complete Thought of God, this organically unified Christian Idea, is the sum total of the Revelation given for the saving of the world. Nothing will be added to its Pentecostal perfection: it is the Eternal Testament. It is this that Christ sent His Apostles to teach all nations. Therefore the Justice as well as the Mercy of God entitles us to say with confidence that it has been made sufficiently credible to all nations and to all individuals. Wherever God's word is spoken, it always carries with it an *aura* of Grace appealing to the hearts of the hearers. Those who are of God will hear the words of God. There are indeed always cases

where the revelation has not penetrated, where eyes have been blinded by prejudice, where souls have lost their way in the mists of this world. Here it is not for us to judge. There is the Covenant, sufficiently visible, and partial or apparent exceptions must be left to what are rightly called the uncovenanted mercies of God. It has always been God's way. In the Old Testament, the dispensation of Hope, it was expected of the chosen people that they should believe in the Theocracy. There was much apparently against it. In spite of appearances, in spite of the weaknesses of men like Heli or the wickedness of his sons, in spite of apostasy which seemed to Elias to be universal, God demanded that they should be faithful to the Hope of Israel. When the Messias came, fulfilling all the prophecies, it was demanded of them that they should receive Him. Though the Pharisees accused Him of breaking the law, though they criticized Him for not living the ascetic life of John the Baptist, though He seemed to prefer the company of publicans and sinners to that of the unco' guid, it was their duty to find in Him the words of eternal Truth. Faith has always had its trials. The new Theocracy of the Kingdom of Heaven had to be recognised in spite of humiliations and persecutions, in spite of scandals, in spite of unfaithful ministers and dispensers of the Mysteries. Faith always means Upward Striving. It is to those who overcome that the crown is given. The Mystery of the Eucharist has its obscurities ; and sometimes its apparent irresponsiveness clogs our efforts. But the truth is always there, and there is always the opportunity and the necessity of opening our eyes and seeing

the armies and the chariots of God on the surrounding hills.

The Point of View. A teeming source of error is the failure to distinguish between the Divine Church and the human society which it is trying to raise to the ideal,—between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdoms of this world. Even in the most Catholic times and places the Church has always been more or less at strife with the World and with human authorities. At the present time there are no Catholic nations ; all that can be said is that in some nations the Church is more acknowledged as a spiritual guide than in others. Even when there was close alliance, a sort of marriage, between Church and State, it would be utterly misleading to judge the Church by the State. It would be like judging a pure and saintly wife by the sins of a wicked husband. We do not measure the Mission of Jesus Christ by the proceedings of Judas Iscariot.

The Lily and the Mud. Let me take an analogy from one of Albrecht Dürer's pictures. In the Adoration of the Magi, in the left corner of the painting there is a pure white lily growing from the ruins of earth : at the foot of the lily there is a beetle of the kind that *cannot* fly, ignoring the lily and turning its back upon the Mystery : but on the lily there has alighted a butterfly, a creature of light and air, turned towards the Virgin and Child. So the Church of God is like a lily growing on a dung-heap. Some of its lower leaves, lying on the rubbish below, are soiled with the filth around. Crawling ants and

beetles can hardly distinguish them from the dirt on which they rest. But the real lily is seen from its flower and fruit, and creatures that fly easily distinguish the life and beauty from the ordure out of which it has sprung. Souls that rise find God's Ideal very visible ; souls that crawl get their eyes blinded and their feet clogged.

" And God said, let there be Light."

Shakespeare has a pretty conceit about the fairies. He makes them dwell in the twilight fringes of the garments of Night, and as the shadow passes round the earth the fairies pursue, " following darkness like a dream." The spiritual reality gives us a far lovelier conception. As the earth spins round to meet the light, the *lux matutina* so beloved of ecclesiastical poetry, emblem of our Eternal Day, the sun sings her his morning serenade (or *aubade*), " With everything that pretty bin, my Lady sweet, arise." And the Bride of Christ in her millions of members (the Third Mystery) puts on her garments of Grace, and, by the hands of her own High Priest and Bridegroom (the Second Mystery), she offers up the pure universal and perpetual Sacrifice (the Fourth Mystery), to the glory and adoration of the Triune Infinitude (the First Mystery). And so day by day as the years roll on, the ceaseless procession of the Four Mysteries sweeps visibly round the globe, gathering in the first fruits for God, leaving the poor blundering world gaping and stumbling behind. There is nothing else like it on earth. The light shineth in the darkness, even if the darkness comprehend it not. This is the

light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world. It is the visible and audible Word of God, fourfold, harmonious and undivided. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

XXVII

THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN AS THE PROPHECY-POEM OF THE FOUR MYSTERIES

Authorship and Interpretation.

All that has hitherto been said of the Four Mysteries from the theological and practical point of view is given to us again in Prophecy and Poetry by St. John. I do not stop to discuss questions of authorship. The dreary inanities of " Higher Criticism " are to my mind sufficiently answered even from literary scientific considerations. Over and above that, the " memory " of the Bride of Christ, on so vital a point, could hardly be at fault. But there is a third consideration which seems to me quite conclusive. That is the artistic. There has never lived any other man than St. John who could have written the Apocalypse. That being my three-fold firm conviction, I see no need to cumber my pages with futile discussions. As for the meaning of the book, I am content with the Church's use of it as the type and form of worship on earth as in heaven. Many, it seems to me, have missed the meaning through not understanding that it is a Poem

as well as a Prophecy, and that therefore it is subject to the laws of Poetry as well as those of Prophecy.*

The Prophetic Function. With regard to the contents of the Apocalypse, there have, of course, always been prolonged discussions on Antichrist, on the Millennium, on the number of the Beast, questions of quite minor importance compared to the great purpose of the book. What were the forecasts of the prophets of old with reference to Egypt or Assyria, compared with the great picture of the Messianic Hope which they handed down enriched with their own visions from generation to generation? That, after all, is the chief function of a prophet, not merely to encourage men by foretelling the fulfilment of their hope, but to lift their minds to see and feel the value of that hope, lest perchance they sell their inheritance for a mess of pottage. St. John does for the Dispensation of Faith what David and Isaias had done for the Dispensation of Hope: he puts into our hands a golden rod to measure the values of our Creed. Life can never seem trivial to one who reads the Apocalypse, for in it is revealed the intensity of the spiritual forces at play just beneath the surface. It is as if an electrician made a short circuit to show us the danger of a live wire.

* What follows is substantially taken from an article of mine in the *Dublin Review*, and is published here by permission. If the detailed argument in this chapter somewhat outweighs the closer style in the rest of the book, my excuse may perhaps be allowed to be that the treatment is somewhat unusual and requires expansion to justify itself.

Language. Scholars have, perhaps, been deterred from recognising the artistic skill of the work by the fact that St. John's Greek was not of the best. It is true; he was almost as disdainful of grammar as Shakespeare was. But while he was writing in Greek, he was thinking in his mother-tongue. His form is not Classic but Oriental: he depends on parallelism, not on metre; on profusion, not on proportion; and the strength of his poem lies in the vividness of his conceptions, not in the delicacy of his language. Dante surpasses him in the latter, but not in the former. Yet even in his language there sometimes flashes forth a phrase which leaves Dante halting far behind.

Inspiration. In speaking of genius, imagination and art, I must not be understood to be minimizing inspiration. The John of Patmos was a very different being from the John of Galilee, but it is not possible to distinguish the elements in his full development. He was naturally tender-hearted, idealistic, and energetically stern. His instinctive refinement led him to acquaintance with the high priest, a strange thing for the fisherman of the north. He early betook himself to St. John the Baptist, and then followed the first gleam of "Behold the Lamb of God." Like St. Paul he was faithful to his first revelation. The man who heard the voice from heaven say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me*," became thenceforward the servant of the doctrine of the Mystical Body, and it is the dominant theme in all his Epistles. St. John heard the words of the Baptist, and sealed

all his teaching with the Poem of the Lamb of God. But there was also rougher fibre in him, and in his union of tenderness with sternness he reminds us once more of Dante. He was the beloved disciple who rested his head on the Heart of Jesus, but our Lord also called him a "son of thunder," and it was he who wanted to call down fire on the enemies of Christ. When we come to the finished product of the work of grace on this natural character, there is no need to distinguish between the human and the divine. As with the prophecies of David and Isaias, we can revere the inspiration while we freely discuss the art.

The Way of Poets. It is a characteristic of poets that they take something common or familiar and make it new or even sublime to us by universalizing or glorifying it. Tennyson loses a friend and in the *In Memoriam* he concentrates the whole world's sense of bereavement. Francis Thompson meets little Daisy on the Sussex Downs and parts with her after a five minutes' friendship ; and this leads him to feel

> The pang of all the partings gone,
> And partings yet to be ;

and he suddenly universalizes the trivial experience into the world-wide reflection :

> Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
> That is not paid with moan ;
> For we are born in others' pain
> And perish in our own.

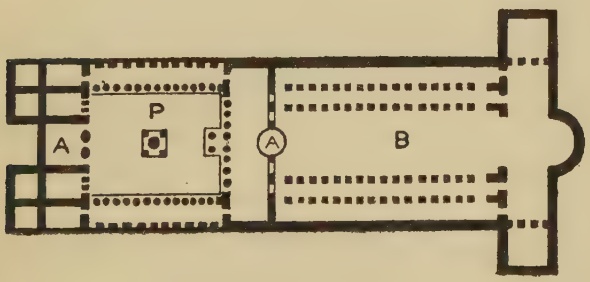
Dante visits Rome for the Jubilee of 1300, goes on

what we should now call a ten days' retreat, entering on Good Friday, passing through the Purgative, Active and Unitive ways, makes his communion on Low Sunday, and the experience is sublimed into the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso*. So St. John takes something very familiar and commonplace, and it becomes the spring-board for his great leap into Infinity. Exaggeration, it may be said. But a picture cannot be projected on to the plane of universal humanity, or on to the firmament, without enlargement, and enlargement is not necessarily exaggeration, not unless it includes distortion. And if the subject contains elements of infinite worth, the utmost power of human enlargement cannot even approximate to the real truth.

Place and Time. In his loneliness on the island of Patmos, St. John was once "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day": possibly not an ordinary Sunday, but *the* Lord's Day from which all other Sundays are called, the Paschal Sunday. Looking across the little strip of sea that separated him from Ephesus, he, like his Master, longed to keep the Pasch with his disciples. He was consoled by the vision that came, while all the time his memory clung to the familiar celebration where he had so often presided.

The Scene. The "scene," then, of the Apocalypse was the place where a small Christian congregation was gathered together for worship. It was in the house of a well-to-do convert built according to the normal plan of Roman mansions. The

"basilica," with its semi-circular apse, was always the most dignified place in the house and was often richly paved with polished marble. An altar with its four-pillared canopy and curtains—probably movable in case of domiciliary visits from the police—was, in Christian houses which lent themselves as churches, placed between the Basilica and the Peristylium. The bishop sat in the centre of the apse and other ministers were on either side of the altar, and the bulk of the



congregation stood in the Peristylium. This arrangement was the germ of the Christian Basilica as we see it now; and St. Paul's, outside the walls of Rome, with its forest of gleaming granite pillars, its marble-decorated walls, its crystalline floors, especially in the apse where every stone in the pavement is precious, its grand old mosaics, the alabaster columns of the altar-canopy, is but an attempt of the sister art of Architecture to say to the eye what the imagery of the Apocalypse says to the ear. This is only one of the

influences exerted by this Prophecy-Poem on the art of all subsequent generations. Artists seem in this case to have been keener in comprehension than theologians.

The Transformation. In this familiar setting, where the earthly worship of the Paschal Sacrifice and Banquet is presented, St. John looks into the spiritual realities and makes them glorify their surroundings. Earth becomes Heaven. The simple chair of the bishop is transformed into a throne, and upon the throne sat the One whom the bishop represents. "And he that sat upon the throne was to the sight like the jasper and the sardine stone, and there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald." It was the symbol of the Triune God.

The Central Vision. A happy accident enabled the present writer to visualize this symbol and appreciate its beauty. He had to undergo an operation for cataract, the preliminary to which was the slitting of the iris to facilitate the removal of the lens. When the bandages were taken off, a strange effect ensued. A strong light shining through the slit in the iris and the exposed edge of the lens was marvellously refracted. The mantle of the light looked like a shadowy throne, and the light itself was divided into a brilliant rose-pink above and flashing blue below, sending blue rays downwards—a translucent ruby and sapphire—and around both was a rainbow *predominantly green*. I never knew till then,

though I had often wondered, how St. John could say that a rainbow looked like an emerald. It was abundantly worth while to have suffered the pain of the operation to be blessed with such a light-experience. I had *seen* the symbol which St. John's imagination had created.

The Symbol. Accessory to the throne, seven lamps represented the sevenfold effluence of the Spirit of God, and four living creatures, the fourfold revelation of the Word. Suddenly, in the midst of the throne, as if by right, stood the Lamb as it were slain, with seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God. Again the sevenfold effluence. It is a marvellous artistic symbol of the doctrine of the Trinity—the Father, and the Word Incarnate, and the Spirit proceeding from both the Father and the Son.

The Action. To go on with the scene, the clergy around the bishop become the twenty-four ancients clothed in white, with crowns of gold. The marble pavement becomes a sea of glass like to crystal. The singers and side-ministers become the 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel (Christian Levites being chosen without restriction); they sing the new song which no one else can sing, and in the evolutions of the ceremonial follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; and the unseen congregation beyond the altar becomes the great multitude which no man can number of all nations of the world, whose voice was as the sound of many waters.

Christian, not Jewish.

Here I am stopped by controversialists. I do not know why I should stop, I am not writing controversy. I am trying to set down what I see St. John is saying. But they persist that I am going to make capital out of my explanations. Well, let us hear them. They say St. John was in an Old Testament mood : he was re-echoing Isaias and Ezechiel and Daniel : indeed, he brings in the Temple and the Ark of the Covenant. But the Old Testament mood was gone for ever. The Christians of Asia Minor, for whom St. John was primarily writing, knew nothing of the old Liturgy ; and if they had known, they would have been bewildered by what he wrote. For he wrote of the Paschal Sacrifice and Feast : and that, with the Jews, was a household, not a temple worship. There was no apse in the Temple, no "sea of glass" ; and the sanctuary and the altar were quite differently placed. And if he mentions the Temple and the Ark of the Covenant, they were on a different plane from the "scene" of the poem. They were looked at from below, and are spoken of as quite extraneous to the "scene." They were both represented together as emblems lifted up into Heaven to be there transformed into that which they had typified. The Temple becomes the New Jerusalem coming *down* as the Bride of the Lamb : the Ark is seen *above* transformed into the Woman crowned with twelve stars. Before our eyes they become the Church-Bride and the Church-Mother, and with the twenty-four elders below we rejoice in the transformation. They are in no way part of the "scene."

Incense.

But the incense? Here a Catholic authority joins in to help to stop me. It says, "There is no evidence for the use of incense in the first century." For me, the word of an Apostle is evidence enough. It is, by way of side-support for my argument, also only from the Apocalypse that we know of Alleluia being part of Christian worship from the beginning. But, more directly, there is this consideration. At first, the Christian Church, anxious to show her continuity, retained that portion of the old worship which was not sacrifice or sacrament. These two things were kept only in their Christian fulfilment. But the Amen, the Hosanna, the Alleluia, the recitation of the Psalms, were gladly retained. After a while, however, the Jewish body and the Christian Church were sharply divided. The Judaizing controversy made it necessary to emphasize the division. After that the Church not only did not go back to anything Judaean, but took pains to do things differently on purpose. Therefore, if once the use of incense had been given up, it could never be brought back again. It was a natural symbol, universal in the East and adopted even by pagans in the West. It signified both honour and the aspiration and sweetness of prayer. There was no reason against it. As soon as records are available, we find Christians using it everywhere; and if it had been a subsequent reintroduction, there would certainly have been some discussion about it. So St. John was only recording a use which had never been interrupted. Besides, the Apocalyptic incense has quite a different ritual from the Mosaic. In the old temple, there had been an

altar of incense inside the sanctuary, and it had nothing to do with the altar of sacrifice. With St. John, the angel (i.e. the deacon) stands before the altar of sacrifice and incense is given to him and it is lit with fire from that altar. The twenty-four elders also have vessels of incense, and in both cases a new and Christian meaning is given to the rite. Formerly it was priestly prayer *for* the people: now it is the intercessory offering of the prayer *of* the people. The objections have only confirmed our conclusions. The paschal Alleluia and the perpetual incense date from the beginning.

Invocation of the Saints.

Incidentally we may remark that the meaning which St. John gives to the use of incense fully justifies that union of prayer between Heaven and Earth which the Catholic Church shows in her devotion to the Saints and Angels. The spirit of this devotion breathes throughout the Apocalypse. And indeed it is quite an essential part of the life of the Mystical Body. Prayer is the expression of Charity and Grace, to which death presents no barrier. And if the Angel deprecates the homage of the Apostle, it is only because Heaven also has its humility, and because the Church above reverences the Church below. The doctrine is clear that the prayers of the holy ones on earth are offered up by the holy ones in Heaven. When people refuse to call upon the Saints in glory, or to pray for the Souls departed, they give the clearest proof that they have denied the Third Mystery.

The Double Action. Having now constituted the scene, we may pass on to the action. And here we must make a distinction, which, indeed, we have already made. There is the action in the scene itself, and there are the visions of which the persons of the scene are, along with the Seer, only spectators. We will take the former first. As a prelude, however, I have a few critical remarks to make which will prevent my having to interrupt myself by discussions. (1) The custom of veiling the altar by curtains between the pillars of the canopy is found in all the early liturgies, and must therefore be primitive. In the West it is now represented only by the veil over the tabernacle. This accounts for the voices heard from the altar in the Apocalypse when the speaker is not seen.* (2) The *Gloria in excelsis* seems to come from the first century, and certainly represents that Acclamation which St. John calls the Adoration of the Lamb. *Gloria . . . Domine Deus, Pater omnipotens . . . Domine Fili . . . Agnus Dei . . . Quoniam tu solus sanctus . . . Jesu Christe cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris.* I am aware that its introduction into the Mass is comparatively recent in the West, but this use was earlier in the East, and anyhow it was always in the Divine Office as "the greater Doxology" and the connection of the Office with the Mass was closer at the beginning than it is now. The *Gloria* may have been derived from the Apocalypse; but if so, then from the earliest times the Church attributed to the

* This point I owe to the admirable article by the Rev. Herbert Lucas, S.J., in *The Catholic Encyclopædia*, on Christian Architecture. I had reached all my other conclusions before seeing his article.

Apocalypse the meaning I am claiming for it now. (3) The Eastern rites are more dramatic than ours in the cries of the deacon to the people and their response ; as, for instance, where in one case after the consecration the deacon says, " Bow your heads to Jesus," and the congregation replies, " We bow them to Thee, O Lord." In the Apocalypse these exhortations are transformed into the cries of the angels from the altar. (4) In every rite, and, indeed, it seems essentially necessary, the priest prepares for his function by self-humiliation and confession of sin. In the Apocalypse the priest is the Lamb Himself, for whom, of course, confession is needless. The necessary sorrow is supplied partly by the Seer himself, who wept because no one was found worthy to open the book, but principally by the Judgment of the Son of Man on the Seven Churches. It is this consideration which makes the Sevenfold Message an integral portion of the book. It is the Bridegroom preparing the Bride for the great marriage that is to follow. (5) A Protestant friend of mine, with whom I was discussing these things, urged that St. John does not even mention the Blessed Eucharist. I said I thought the whole poem was on the Paschal Feast, and what else is the Eucharist ? Only symbolically, he replied. Then, I said, see what happened when the seventh seal was opened. " There was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour." Have we had that silence before ? Read in St. John's Gospel : " Jesus, having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end. (Silence.) And when supper was done . . ." What supper ? The one mentioned in the silence. It was the same writer, and the same

mystery, and his reasons were the same. How Dante must have loved that silence ! He made it the climax of his own Vision, when he stood at the summit of creation face to face with the Apocalyptic threefold rainbow view of the One that sat upon the throne. Part of St. John's reason was that the *Disciplina arcani* was already in force. This, indeed, we see even in the Epistle to the Hebrews, a book to which St. John several times alludes as if he loved it. But that rule or discipline, namely, the injunction not to mention openly so tangible a mystery lest it be profaned by the pagans, applied more strongly than ever to the Apocalypse, which was being written where at any moment it might fall into the hands of the persecutors. Therefore the initiates, who were always keenly on the watch for allusions to the mystery they loved, would know at once what that silence meant. My friend was still unconvinced. Then, I said, what do you make of the two Angel Reapers ? Just where the communion was to take place, they were told to thrust in their sickles. And what was their harvest ? Corn and Wine. Here the initiates would exult. What else could it mean ? If there were any further doubt, what became of that Wine ? The wine-press was trodden and forth there came Blood, in such abundance that it flooded the land and rose to the bridles of the horses. Of what other Wine on earth could that be said ? What other Blood was ever shed in such profusion ? Even our own unregenerate Marlowe wrote :

See where Christ's Blood streams o'er the firmament.

My friend began to see that there was something in what I said.

The Parallel. These things being premised, let me put in parallel columns, not necessarily in the usual order for the second column, the actions of the "scene" and the actions of the Mass. Skilled liturgists may tell me that some of the latter are borrowed from the former. That only means, as I said before, that the early Church thought about the Apocalypse what I am trying to vindicate for it. By way of compensation, the skilled liturgist will probably find many more coincidences, especially from Eastern rites, than I have been able to notice. Those I give are quite convincing to me. I am quite aware that the modern ceremonies of the Mass are the result of a long development. I have no intention of asserting that St. John foresaw the full process of this development. What I mean is that, in the main, all the early Liturgies (the Roman included) have a generic resemblance, and that this generic resemblance is remarkably like the Apocalypse scene. To what extent St. John's Vision was a picture of the development up to his time, and to what extent the subsequent development has been influenced by his Vision, I do not presume to say.

The Apocalypse.	The Mass.
The Son of Man judges, warns, forgives.	Judica me . . . Confiteor . . . Indulgentiam.
The Lamb takes the Book.	Introibo ad altare Dei.
The 24 elders offer up the incense-prayer.	Kyrie eleison : with incense.

Adoration of the Lamb.	*Gloria* . . . Agnus Dei . . . tu solus sanctus.
The first four seals.	The instruction, or reading of the Word.
Fifth seal: souls of martyrs under the altar.	(Oramus . . . per merita sanctorum quorum reliquiæ hic sunt).
Sixth seal: Wait "till we sign the servants of God in their foreheads."	The incensing of the ministers of the altar (also the Pax).
Seventh seal: "the mystery is finished."	Consecration.
Silence in heaven.	Silent adoration.
Angel with incense.	Incense at Elevation.
The Kingdom: the Temple and the Woman.	The prayer of the Kingdom: *Pater noster* . . . adveniat Regnum tuum.
The War with the Dragon.	Sed libera nos a malo.
The Lamb upon Mount Sion.	*Agnus Dei.*
Blessed are the dead.	(Commemoration of the departed).
The Reapers with their harvest of Corn and Wine.	Preparation for Communion.
Alleluia to the Lamb.	Ecce Agnus Dei.
The Marriage with the Bride.	Communion.

It has now been shown that the "scene" which runs through the whole Apocalypse is an idealized picture of the Paschal Sacrifice and Banquet. From the point of view of Grace, it is a picture of lovely light. But in a world like this, no picture can consist of light alone; and the intenser the light, the more gloomy the shadows. Hence the terrible visions of the Prophet.

Light and Shadow.

Every new revelation of God brings bliss to those who believe, but terror to those who refuse. It is a pitiful thing that even over the Baby Jesus the word of truth should have to say, "This child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted." In this concrete life, good and evil seem hopelessly tangled together, and our temptation is to minimize the difference between them: but when the two-edged sword of revelation is brought, it cuts the Gordian knot. St. John seems to bear in mind that text in the Epistle to the Hebrews "The word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword; and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This is what is meant by the two-edged sword of the Lamb, and perhaps the most awful phrase in the book is "the wrath of the Lamb." Therefore, just as throughout the book the Church's worship is sublimed into Heaven, so the world's profanity is precipitated into Hell. And Hell is not a place of elegance and loveliness. The opening of every seal brings more woe upon unbelief, and when the seventh seal is opened and the fullness of the identity of the Paschal altar and the Cross of Calvary is revealed, the Prophet sees again what he himself saw as he stood at the foot of that Cross. All the powers of evil are always banded together against the Word of God. Then it was the diabolical envy and malice of the Pharisees, the worldliness of Pilate and the fleshliness of Herod, and the very earth shook and

thundered and was darkened. Now it was Satan, "the spiritual wickedness in high places," the persecuting power of the Roman Empire, and the moral corruption of the time. It is always the same war—the Dragon, the Beast and the Harlot.

Good and Evil. Side by side, therefore, with the Beauty of Holiness the Seer shows us the Ugliness of Sin. All the evil that has ever befallen the earth, or shall befall it, is but a just retribution for all the pains it has inflicted on the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world—the Red Horse of War, the Black Horse of Famine, the Pale Horse of Death, catastrophe and terror, destruction and woe, all mingled with the smoke of the bottomless pit, whence issue the fearsome locusts who gnaw the souls of men with fruitless remorse: and with it all, the hideous presence, along with his satellites, of the Dragon Prince of this world, who is already judged.

The Victory. Amid these visions of terror St. John sees the consolation of successive victories of Grace. Once it was Tyre, and Tyre was destroyed: then it was Jerusalem, and Jerusalem is destroyed: now it is Babylon, and Babylon shall be destroyed. Looking into the future, he sees the Church victorious over the blood-stained Empire and enthroned for a thousand years above its ruins. And indeed (with the exception of the Mohammedan irruption) for about a thousand years the Church was supreme wherever Rome had been supreme, and she had no enemies except those of her own household.

The exception is, of course, an important one, and seems to show that nothing on earth can attain to ideal perfection. St. John's purpose, I take it, was to show the Christian world that in the Eucharistic Sacrifice it had a promise of speedy relief on earth and everlasting triumph in Heaven. Beyond that it seems waste of time to peer into this symbolic poem for more definite interpretations of fact. The Prophet would have every generation know that the war is perpetual, and that we are in the thick of it. We bear either the mark of the Lamb or the mark of the Beast. This war gathers with utmost intensity around the Paschal Sacrifice and Banquet. Those who partake with faith and love are glorified ; but unless a man eats of that Flesh and drinks of that Blood, he shall not see life for ever, and he that partakes unworthily eats and drinks damnation to himself.

The Four Mysteries.

To sum up. The Apocalypse may be regarded first as a prophecy-poem on the Paschal Sacrifice and Banquet, the Eucharistic Mystery which unites Heaven and Earth. Or, secondly, it may be regarded as the Drama of the Marriage of the Earthly Bride with her Heavenly Bridegroom, of her Unity and her Glory, the Mystery of the Universal Body of Christ. Or, thirdly, as the Revelation of the Incarnate Word, One with the Father, the Alpha and Omega, the beloved Redeemer, the awe-inspiring Judge, the Jesus who lived in our midst, to whom the Spirit and the Bride say Come, and to whom His world-weary disciple pathetically says, " Amen : come, Lord Jesus ! " Or, fourthly, as the

symbolic seal of the doctrine of the Triune God, the Father and the Word occupying the same throne and receiving the same adoration, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. This fourfold unity binds the whole poem more closely together than either the vision of Dante or the tragedy of Macbeth is bound. And the Apocalypse unity is moreover irradiated with all the fiery tongues of Pentecost.

Unity of the Poem. Still more, there are artistic devices which, instinctively or by deliberate craft, all great workers in Poetry, Music, or Architecture throw prominently forward to enhance the sense of the unity that is essentially there. There are recurring phrases throughout the Apocalypse which serve as *leit-motifs*. These mostly occur at the beginning and the end of the messages to the Seven Churches—just the portion which some critics find to be organically disconnected with the Divine Drama And above all, the very beginning (i, 4-6) is a synopsis of the work, the statement of the theme that is going to be developed, repeated, transformed and re-stated over and over again, like the rhythmic waves of a great musical symphony, or the alternating forms of a great cathedral :

" Grace be unto you and peace from Him that is, and that was and that is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us a kingdom and

priests to God and His Father, to Him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen."

In the case of St. John this may be merely instinctive, but the more I study art the more sceptical I become of the "native wood-notes wild" theory. If a man is naturally poetical, I cannot imagine anything more likely to turn him into a finished and conscious artist than the training and experience which developed the fisherman of Galilee into the Seer of Patmos.

An Artistic Device. Such another device is the constant recurrence of the number seven. On the side of Grace, the seven churches, stars and candlesticks, the seven spirits before the throne, the seven lamps, the seven eyes of the Lamb, the seven seals, the seven angels with trumpets, the seven angels with vials of plagues. On the side of Evil, like a horrible parody, the Dragon with seven heads and diadems, the Beast with seven heads, the Scarlet Woman with seven heads, the seven hills and the seven kings. It has the unifying effect of the fivefold rhythm that runs through the slow movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. It is Revelation beautified by Art.

Finale. This, then, is the import of the Apocalypse. And surely we are entitled to fling all doubt, controversy and criticism behind our backs, and hail it as the crowning glory of the New Testament. It is the fullest manifestation of all the Four Mysteries which make up the Temple of God, not only in their separate glories but in their inter-relation and due

proportion. It is the measurement of the City of God " which lieth in a foursquare, and the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal." More than any other revelation it makes us " able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth." It fulfils the function of the Prophet in the New Law, namely, to teach humanity to see the things of faith as God sees them. With the eyes of our soul thus purged, we realise that it is not the extravagance of rhapsody, but plain literal truth, when just before the supreme moment of the Mass we lift ourselves to Heaven and say : " Et ideo cum Angelis et Archangelis, cum Thronis et Dominationibus, cumque omni militia coelestis exercitus, hymnum gloriæ tuæ canimus sine fine dicentes, Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth : pleni sunt coeli *et terra* gloria tua : Hosanna in excelsis."

In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus.

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AUTHOR

The Four Mysteries of the

TITLE Faith